

**Work Package 4** “Investigating the possibilities of emerging industry development through cross regional cluster cooperation”

**Activity 4.2** “Pilot: Case studies on good practices on industry development projects in selected sectors”

**Output 4.2.3** “Case study conclusions”

**Piemonte Region  
Project Partner 8**

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## Section 1: Methodology Description

### 1.1 Activity 4.2 in the framework of ClusterCOOP project

Activity 4.2 is part of Work package number 4 “Investigating the possibilities of emerging industry development through cross regional cluster cooperation”, whose objective is to facilitate the development of emerging industry and cross regional cluster cooperation. It follows activity 4.1 aimed at identifying emerging sectors in partner countries/regions.

It is structured in three sub-activities:

- 4.2.1 Elaboration of a common methodology for case studies on good examples of emerging industry development projects
- 4.2.2 Realisation of 3 case studies
- 4.2.3 Elaboration of 1 case study conclusion

To each sub-activity corresponds one output and shared responsibilities among partners:

SUB-TASK	OUTPUT	PARTNERS INVOLVED
Common methodology for case studies (on good examples of emerging industry development projects)	4.2.1	Piemonte Region
3 case studies	4.2.2	Piemonte Region, SIEA, City of Rzeszow
1 case study conclusions	4.2.3	Piemonte Region

**The overall objective of activity 4.2 is to gain a deeper understanding of cluster organisations role in facilitating and supporting transnational cooperation in emerging industry sectors. It will be pursued by conducting three case studies, analysing good practices of transnational cooperation in emerging industry sectors in which the intervention of cluster organisations had been crucial.**

According to the Application Form the partner responsible for providing the methodology and delivering the final conclusions is Piemonte Region. The three case studies must be chosen in Piemonte, Slovakia and Poland and performed by Piemonte Region (PP8), SIEA (PP6) and the City Office of Rzeszow (PP10).

## **1.2 Description of the process**

The general objective of the case study exercise is to contribute to the knowledge of a group of practitioners that includes policy makers, public administration managers, experts from innovation agencies and intermediate bodies for the economic development, working in the different partner organisations in the field of clusters policies and cluster programmes.

This group of practitioners is heterogeneous and, as a whole, is responsible for the entire policy cycle, from policy definition, design of funding programmes, to implementation and management of programmes, impact assessment and evaluation.

The case study exercise intended to contribute to a deeper understanding of cluster organisations role in facilitating and supporting transnational cooperation for emerging industries sectors, so to provide the target group of practitioners with some inputs for their current activities.

The three case studies had been performed so to collect information on successful experiences in transnational cooperation (in emerging industries sectors) occurred as the result of cluster organisations intervention.

The case studies had been conducted following a common methodology (delivered as output 4.2.1), intended to provide a common understanding of the task, define the rationale of the case study exercise, set the methods to be used for data gathering, illustrate the procedures and tools for data collection and analysis.

According to the commonly accepted method for designing and conducting case studies in practice-oriented research, the exercise followed seven steps:

<b>Step</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Result</b>
1. Research topic selection	Research topic had been defined and agreed among partners during the planning of the project and it is set in the application form	<u>Research topic</u> Cluster organisations play a central role in facilitating and supporting transnational cooperation in emerging industry sectors
2. Choice of the general research objective	Elaborated and specified in Section 1 of this Output "Common Methodology for case studies"	<u>General objective</u> To contribute to the knowledge of a group of practitioners that includes policy makers, public administration managers, experts from innovation

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		agencies and intermediate bodies for the economic development, working in the different partner organisations in the field of clusters policies and cluster programmes
3. Choice of the Specific research objective	Elaborated and specified in Section 1 of this Output "Common Methodology for case studies"	<u>Specific research objective</u> To contribute to the knowledge of the group of practitioners above defined by exploring the role of cluster organisations in transnational cooperation for emerging industry sectors
4. Research strategy	Elaborated and specified in Section 1 of this Output "Common Methodology for case studies"	<u>Research strategy</u> 3 parallel comparative case studies
5. Selection of the cases	Instructions for the selection reported in Section 2 of this Output "Common Methodology for case studies"	<u>Selection of 3 Case studies</u>
6. Measurement	The three partners involved (PP8, PP6, PP10) will perform the measurement through the case study template, provided in Section 3 of this Output "Common Methodology for case studies". Data collection will be made through: qualitative interview, multiple sources of evidence, questionnaires, etc.	<u>3 Completed Case studies</u>
7. Case studies analysis, Results and report	Piemonte region will conduct the analysis of the three case studies, illustrating results and findings in a Summary Report.	<u>Summary Report</u>

### **1.3 The variables addressed by the case studies**

Due to its centrality, the step 3 “Choice of the Specific research objective”, included a sound exploration of current practices and theory about the case study topic, that allowed to re-elaborate the theoretical propositions assumed in the Application Form in a more detailed form:

1. Increased transnational cooperation is considered a promising tool to strengthen competitiveness and profitability of firms
2. Cluster organizations have been proven to be an excellent facilitator for transnational cooperation
3. Firms operating in emerging industry sectors benefit from being part of clusters active in cross-regional cluster cooperation activities
4. Cluster policies and cluster funding programmes should better address transnational
5. The knowledge acquired through the case study exercise will help the practitioner in defining better policies targeting clusters transnational cooperation.

While proposition 1 is included in the Central Europe Operational Programme, propositions 4 and 5 are set in the Application Form, proposition 2 and 3, widely explored in economic theories, underpin this case study exercise.

Consequently, the concerned variables selected and described during the measurement step had been:

- the activities performed by cluster organisations to increase transnational cooperation
- the role of facilitator for transnational cooperation performed by cluster organisations.

The logic linking between the theoretical propositions and variables analyzed, allowed to match the pieces of information gathered in the case studies and deliver the knowledge needed to the group of practitioners.

<b>Theoretical propositions</b>	<b>Logic linking</b>	<b>Variable</b>
Cluster organizations have been proven to be an excellent facilitator for transnational cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experiences, strategies of the clusters in transnational cooperation</li> <li>- Mandate to support transnational cooperation of members</li> </ul>	Cluster organisations role as facilitator for transnational cooperation

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Firms operating in emerging industry sectors benefit from being part of clusters active in cross-regional cluster cooperation activities	- Concrete actions of the clusters in transnational cooperation - Services offered - Staff dedicated to transnational cooperation	Cluster organisations activities performed to increase transnational cooperation
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The variables had been addressed in the case study through the analysis of **projects or initiatives that originated from the intervention of cluster organisations and that produced some form of transnational cooperation (as stated aim or indirect fallout).**

As indicated in the Application Form, **clusters chosen for the case study must be active in one of the emerging sectors identified by activity 4.1.**

Along with these “content” related requirements, the methodology contained also “data related” requirements, which had been used for the selection of the 3 case studies.

The selection and the measurement step had been carried out individually by the three concerned partners, using a common template (provided in Annex 1). The template was composed of multiple choice questions and free text questions. Data requested were both quantitative and qualitative and had been collected by direct interviews, review of data provided by the clusters themselves, regional/national statistical surveys, and whatever source considered useful and reliable.

## Section 2: the Case Studies

### 2.1 Piemonte Case Study: Project ALPlastics - Piemonte Innovation Cluster "Proplast"

#### A. Identification of the project/initiative

1. The project/initiative analyzed was realized through:
  - own funds of the cluster organisation, coming from:
    - Fees of cluster members
    - Revenues for services provided on the market
  - external financial contribution, from:
    - Local/Regional level
    - National level (24%)
    - European level (76%)
2. Transnational cooperation
  - was the specific aim of the project/initiative
  - resulted from activities aimed at different aims (indirect fallout)
3. Transnational cooperation is referred to
  - Research activities
  - Innovation activities
  - Networking
  - Business (new supplier, new markets exploration, please specify .....)
  - Other (specify .....)
4. Clusters involved in the transnational cooperation are from
  - Europe
    - Central Europe
    - Mediterranean Area
    - Northern Countries
    - Other (Austria, France, Switzerland)**
  - Asia (specify ...)
  - North America (specify ...)
  - South America (specify ...)
6. Time scale of the project/initiative
  - starting date: 9/2011
  - end date: 8/2013
  - or  ongoing



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## **B. Detailed description of the project or initiative**

*(at least 2000 characters)*

ALPlastics is a network of private/public actors involved in local development policies in 5 Alpine regions, financed under the Territorial Cooperation Programme Alpine Space 2007-2013 and coordinated by Proplast cluster. The objective of the network is to promote a public-private cooperation and create proper conditions for open and strategic innovation in plastic clusters, strengthening the related economic sector.

The project mainly focuses on the fundamental role that Cluster organisations can play toward strategic innovation, competitiveness of enterprises, employment and prosperity in regions.

ALPlastics have been designed to help Cluster organisations to play their role at the centre of the "cluster 's triple helix system" and promote activities that can harness the resources and talents of industry, government and academia, to develop practical solutions toward strategic innovation.

An "open innovation platform" dedicated to the plastics industry and a "technology roadmap" are key objectives of the project. Additional goal is to benchmark alpine plastics clusters and regional innovation policies, with the aim to help regional governments to enhance their future innovation support programmes.

In this activity ALPlastics works with SMEs operating in the plastics sector in order to evaluate their potential in term of innovation capacity, technological level and competencies: the project tries to guide SMEs toward strategic innovation by analyzing their weaknesses (trying to correct them) and by giving the highest value to their strengths, helping them to create new businesses by widening their horizons in terms of technology and applications fields, with an Open innovation approach.

The partners are all involved in Cluster management, with Regional and/or National official recognition in 5 countries in the Alpine Space area:

- Proplast (IT)
- Clusterland Oberösterreich GmbH, Kunststoff-Cluster (AT)
- Plastipolis (FR)
- Chemie-Cluster Bayern GmbH (DE)
- CARMA (FR)
- Réseau plasturgie (CH)
- Regione Piemonte (IT)

All partners play a significant role in the implementation of regional policies in terms of R&D, TT, local development, support to SMEs networks. They participate to the political debate and play both a practical and institutional role in the implementation of industrial development policies. Their common specialisation in a specific field (plastics) helps them to compare significant/successful previous experiences and to contextualise newly conceived policies.

Multi-sectoral actors from the chemical industry, the mechanical industry (machinery and molds), and the rubber/plastics-converting sector are members of the clusters and are involved as observers.

### ***C. Description of the cluster***

1. Which is the name of the cluster? **PROPLAST**
2. In which country is the cluster organisation located? **ITALY (Tortona – Alessandria)**
3. In which technological/industrial area is the cluster mainly active?  
Please choose among:  
Aerospace Agro-Food Automotive Biotechnology Business & Financial Services  
Chemical Construction (incl. equipment) Creative Electronics, Electrical  
Equipment Energy Environment/Green Technologies Footwear and Leather  
Health Care/Medical Devices ICT Jewellery Logistics Maritime **Materials and  
new Materials** Mechatronics Media Metal Processing/Manufacturing Micro- and  
Nanotechnology Mining (incl. equipment) Optics and Photonics Packaging  
**Plastics** Printing Production Technology Railway Security Software  
Telecommunications Textile Tourism Transport Infrastructure Wood, Paper,  
Furniture  
Or specify...
4. Total cluster members: 211
5. Number of firms cluster members: 186
6. Number of SMEs cluster members: 151
7. Year of establishment of the cluster: 1998
8. Please paste here the LOGO of the cluster:

proplast

**PLASTICS**  
INNOVATION POLE

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9. According to the classification of the different ways of channelling RDI funding through clusters - elaborated in the TACTICS project (see Annex 1) - please tick the level of involvement of the clusters in your country/region:

- Meta-level
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4
- Level 5
- Mixed, specify: Meta level+Level 1.

10. Please list the services provided to the cluster members:

- 1 - technical services: testing, processing, packaging, product and process engineering
- 2 - training courses at all levels
- 3 - applied research facilities
- 4 - technology matching
- 5 - recruiting.

11. Please tick the services provided to the cluster members for the internationalisation:

- Support in developing the internationalisation strategies
- Support in developing a marketing&branding strategies
- Providing information about relevant markets and local trends
- Providing additional information (legislation, tax rules, local funding opportunities, local experts, inter-cultural behaviour, typical pitfalls, etc.)
- Identifying appropriate partners
- Organising access to relevant key actors / initiating first business contacts in foreign countries -> **only toward "known/familiar" countries (rarely first "exploration")**
- Advertising / selling the products of the SMEs
- Organising business missions **(in partnership with other actors, like Chamber of Commerce, etc.)**
- Representing the companies at trade fairs
- Raising of funds to reduce the investments of the firms for internationalisation
- Other (specify...)

12. According to the cluster analyzed, which are the specificities of a cluster organisation operating in an emerging industry sectors?

1. **Structure of the cluster.** Proplast has a strong business base; it has been founded by enterprises to support enterprises. Since participants to a cluster influence its priorities, in the case of Proplast priorities and strategies are mainly driven by companies. Even if for emerging industries the research and innovation component are central, a strong business orientation is very important for economic sustainability and competition.



**2. Nature of cooperation between cluster participants.** Clusters offer a favourable and dynamic business environment in which emerging industries can flourish. Emerging industry sectors (both as new and promising growth areas that can emerge out of new technologies or radical innovations, both as the renewal, transformation, or intersection of existing economic activities), more than other, need clusters that can offer well-defined leadership. Emerging technologies do not automatically create emerging industries; interactions among different actors along the value chain and across different sectors are essential. So the role of a cluster as initiator of cooperation activities (intra-cluster and external cooperation) is really critical for survival and success of emerging industries. Cooperation between members is primarily initiated by Proplast, which is directly involved in all cluster activities.

**3. Services provided by the cluster.** Proplast is strongly committed to become an excellent platform for leveraging existing assets in business environments. Therefore, Proplast try to offer services to members that are strictly oriented by their needs and that are high-rank level so to provide added business value. Proplast considers to have built a good mix of services offered, balancing tailor-made approaches with variety and quality.

### 13. Description of the experiences of the cluster in transnational cooperation

Proplast started its transnational cooperation activities in 2007, with two similar clusters established in France: Plastipolis (in Rhône-Alpes Region) and Artemis (in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region). The three clusters strengthened their collaboration participating in a first European project, supported by the Territorial Cooperation Programme ALCOTRA of cross-border cooperation between Italy and France, called Interplast, then evolved in Interplast 2 and, recently, in the Eden project (focused on eco-design and sustainable development).

Proplast designed and submitted for financing the ALPlastics project in 2010, within the Territorial Cooperation Programme Alpine Space, disclosing its gained experiences in establishing links and collaborations around Europe and showing its growing recognition as reliable and strong partner, for both the business sector and the regional government. Through ALPlastics, Proplast bonds specific objectives related to the plastic sector with a strong emphasis on synergies among triple helix actors (business, research and policy maker).

Another important development in transnational collaboration activities came in 2011, with the approval of the WIINTECH project. The project is especially important since it has been submitted under the Call for World Class Clusters of the DG Enterprise and Industry, which only admitted for financing 4 projects around Europe. The project focuses on new materials and processes for Clean Technologies and it is specifically aimed at internationalisation of clusters. It launched a pilot initiative in "support of international development of European clusters, by offering them the possibility to define a common internationalisation strategy and by accompanying them to the signature of



partnership agreements with non-EU clusters” (in particular Japan, USA, Korea, Brazil, India, China, Russia, Mediterranean countries).

Proplast transnational cooperation activities show a very positive trend:

- in quantitative terms: the number of projects implemented in their role of cluster organisation raised gradually along time
- in qualitative terms: it started with cross-border cooperation activities and succeeded in scaling up the different stages, till achieving worldwide scale actions. Secondly it obtained growing recognition as reliable actor in the plastic sectors, from the regional level to the European stage, from “peer” clusters to regional and national governments to European institutions.

14. According to the cluster organisation, how companies perceive transnational cooperation?

Proplast member companies perceive international/transnational cooperation activities important but very dangerous and extremely complicated in SMEs perspective. They look at international/transnational cooperation as a threat for the protection of the firm know-how. Moreover language barriers hinder their interest in going international. The cluster is considered as a “defence” or “shelter” in the global economic scenario.

15. Please list and describe all the concrete actions undertaken by the cluster to facilitate transnational cooperation for their cluster members

- 1 – Participation to international fairs in representation of members
- 2 – Contact with similar clusters
- 3 – Participation to business missions.

16. Is there a strategy for transnational cooperation or internationalisation being developed and implemented by the cluster organisation?

- No
- Yes, please describe it...

17. Does the cluster organisation have a mandate or agreed task to support its members in facilitating transnational/international cooperation (stated in the association contract signed by members, stated in the statute/charter of the cluster organisation, etc.)?

- No
- Yes, please describe where and how it is formalized: there is an informal agreement with cluster members.

18. Does the cluster have specifically designated staff appointed to support transnational cooperation and internationalisation? How many?

- No. On request Proplast can offer support of specialized staff.
- Yes, please indicate how many ...

19. Does the cluster have any monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of your internationalisation activities?

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No

Yes, please briefly describe it...

20. How do the cluster organisation measure/assess the impact of internationalisation services or transnational activities offered to cluster members?

No measurement/assessment

Yes

- Number of contacts established
- Number of foreign experts / talents attracted
- Number of cooperation agreements
- Number of financial cooperation
- Number of new R&D&I projects
- Number of new projects initiated (non R&D&I)
- Access to new technologies, products, services or processes
- Increased turnover of SMEs generated in target markets
- Others, please specify...

21. Has the cluster been subject to external assessment, benchmark exercise, evaluation, label process? (Please describe)

Yes, Proplast participated in a benchmark exercise performed by ESCA and VDI/VDE-IT in December 2012, according to their methodology.

The activity was foreseen in the ALPlastics project.

Proplast obtained the "Cluster Excellence Label BRONZE".

***D. Detailed description of the impact of the project/initiative on the cluster organisation and on the cluster members, including quantitative and qualitative data and how they were measured (interviews, questionnaire, data from balance sheet, etc.)***

In the last 2 decades the plastic sector in the regions involved in the project has suffered a serious crisis, mainly due to the international competition caused by:

- increasing competition from low-cost-labour countries
- high technology countries, such as North American countries or Japan, investing in new high quality/automated processes
- severe international financial and economical crisis.

Surviving companies are today very active and dynamic, but they are facing the main challenge of being competitive in a market that is probably still more complex and keen.

ALPlastics identified the following key elements for competitiveness in the next decade:

- 1) high technical quality of products, to be obtained by most advanced production techniques and concepts
- 2) acceptable product costs to be obtained by automation and efficient technologies
- 3) high design quality and mass customisation



#### 4) high level of sustainability of the products /processes.

Plastics SMEs are looking today for new paths, trying to consolidate their position or differentiate their business and improve their competitiveness in the global market. But competitiveness requires a high degree of innovation, and strategic innovation implies risks. SMEs investing in R&D should have a clear view on cultural/social trends and new global economic drivers (i.e. environmental consciousness, sustainability trends, "mass customization") that can influence markets. Other central elements SMEs should be aware of are the most promising applications field for plastics and the most promising technologies, able to lead to the manufacturing of sustainable and outstanding applications.

Strategic innovation also requires investment, and therefore:

- an adequate critical mass and cooperation across Regions
- a vertical cooperation inside a production chain and "cross fertilization"/cooperation across technological domains
- the participation of all relevant triple helix stakeholders.

To address these problems and needs, the project envisaged testing the following solutions:

1. at SMEs AND INDUSTRY LEVEL: creation of an Open Innovation Platform (with a Technology roadmap) and a series of Technology transfer and R&D training opportunities
2. at CLUSTER MANAGEMENT LEVEL - set-up of Cluster Facilitator Programme: a trans-national platform for networking and for exchange of good practices and experience among cluster facilitators
3. at POLICY MAKER LEVEL: set-up of a Policy and Innovation Programme (with publication of a dedicated Whitepaper) targeted at Governmental decision makers.

The most interesting element of the project (in the view of the case study scope and objective) is the Open Innovation Platform.

The Platform is based on the Open innovation model, in which the companies open their boundaries, widening the scenario of new technological solutions coming from outside and accepting ideas of new products/applications suggested by external inputs. As a result companies gain competitiveness on the market, increase their ability to create new businesses, also outside the typical market frames.

The Platform had been launched at the beginning of 2013 (<http://www.alplastics.net/openinnovationplatform.aspx>), following a wide-ranging analysis and study of sector specificities, potential users and providers of the platform.



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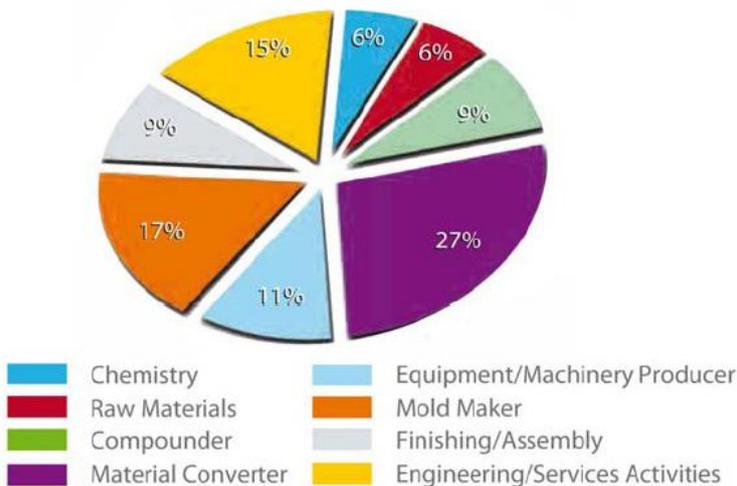
ALPlastics partners conducted a thoughtful study in order to understand constraints and facilitators that SMEs are facing in their innovation activities. The study followed two phases:

1. First phase: the industrial context of the Alpine regions involved in ALPlastics had been analyzed, interviewing managers from 6 Alpine Plastics Clusters. This provided a competitiveness overview on the Alpine plastics sector.
2. Second phase: SMEs from the Alpine regions have been directly interviewed and asked about their innovation capacities, technology level, competences, as well as their opinion towards open innovation. A sample of 60 companies from the six Alpine plastics clusters had been reached, so to compose a quite comprehensive framework of SMEs strengths and weaknesses in the Alpine plastics sector.

Some data about the analysis of SMEs in the Alpine regions (as reported in the ALPlastics Newsletter, available on the project website):

Distribution of companies interviewed according to their types of activities

ACTIVITIES

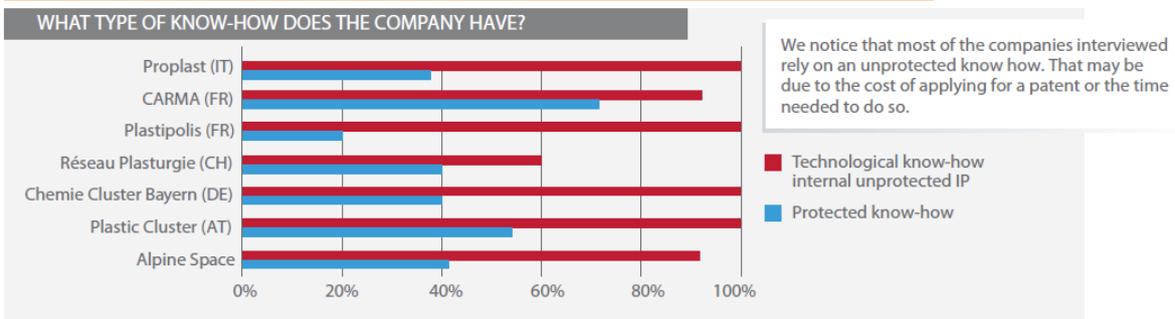


The sample of companies interviewed has a majority of material converters, followed by mold makers and engineering services.

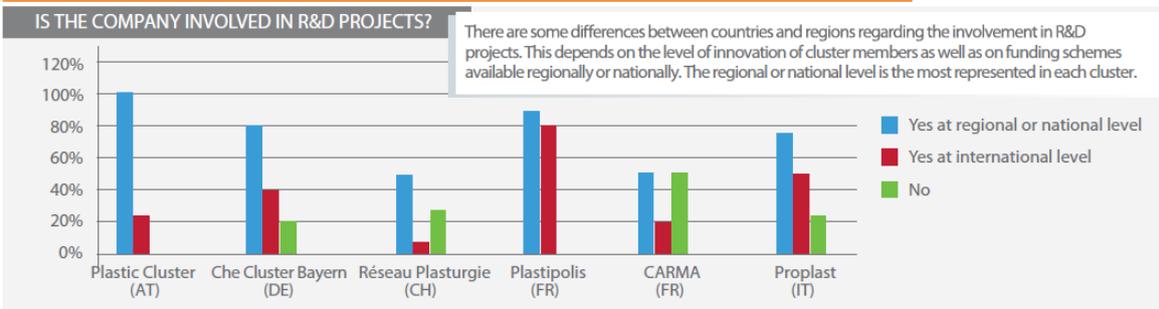


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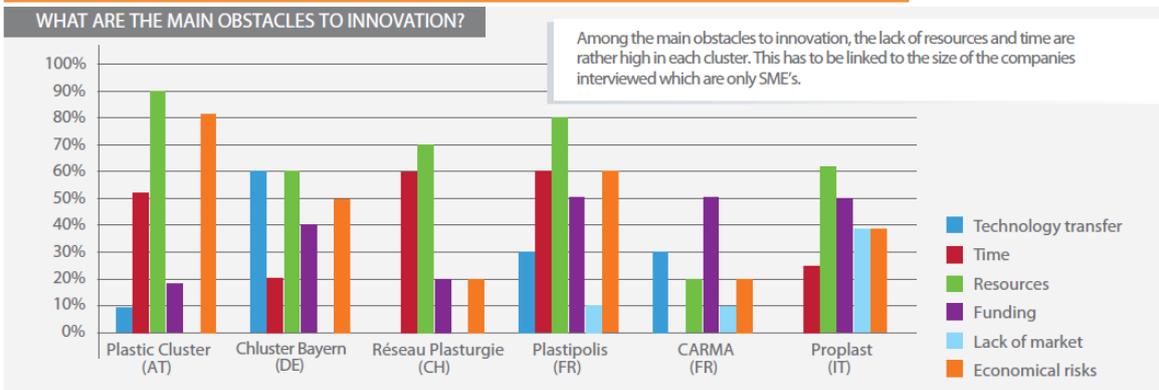
Distribution of companies according to the type of know-how in the company, result for the Alpine Space and by cluster.



Percentage of companies involved in R&D projects, result by cluster (based on a sample of around 10 companies per cluster)



Main obstacles to innovation for the companies, result by cluster (about 10 sample companies per cluster)



By combining the results of the two phases study, ALPlastics partners built a SWOT analysis of the Alpine plastics sector:



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**SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE ALPINE SPACE**

**STRENGTHS**

- Innovative companies with good know-how and technological level
- Companies are in general open to cooperate with external partners (companies, R&D centers and universities); actively involved in R&D projects, including international R&D projects
- High R&D intensity, especially in France and Italy
- Good industrial performance level in terms of quality management system and certifications
- Highly oriented to export, open to international collaboration
- Most companies propose training programs to employees

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Public support in innovation
- Opportunities for TT and OI: increased exchange between actors, new initiatives (technological platforms, portals, networks, collaborative projects, etc)
- Increased EU network, access to technology in other countries
- Globalization, larger market and sourcing bases

**WEAKNESSES**

- Small company size, lack of time and resources for both innovation and international development. Economic risks also hinder innovation
- As to open innovation, many companies are reticent
- High dependence on automotive industry
- Opinions towards IP are divided. Some companies see IP protection too costly and not needed

**THREATS**

- Difficulty in recruiting workers, especially skilled workers
- Lack of funding is an obstacle to innovation. In general, low level of private funding. Public funding is not completely adapted to companies' needs, because of the bureaucracy and long processes in the public institutions, especially on EU level
- Instability in R&D partnership
- Legal regulations can be a barrier, e.g. Reach, import regulations in some countries
- Competition from other countries, including low-cost countries
- Financial crisis, Europe is seriously affected

In conclusion, the analysis at cluster management level and the analysis at SME's level both showed the need and interest for Open Innovation initiatives and provided concrete recommendations to adapt the Platform to SMEs needs

To set up the Platform, project partners has analyzed market mega-trends and drivers, scouting and benchmarking R&D top competencies and then has created an atlas of top technology providers.

Through the Plastics Open Innovation, they are proposing these technologies to Alpine space SMEs, with the aim to steer strategic innovation of SMEs and strengthen their competitiveness.

The partners all together represent a total of 1316 cluster members and potential users of the Platform, of which:

- enterprises (mainly SMEs): 1058
- universities and other RTD/training bodies: 161
- public bodies (regions, provinces, states, etc): 17
- others (associations chamber of commerce, etc): 80

As mentioned above, along with the implementation of the platform, ALPlastics are also realising the so called "Transnational Plastics Academy", a series of seminars delivered as vocational training in the field technology transfer, knowledge management and R&D for the of plastics sectors.

**E. Detailed description of the reasons that motivated the choice of the project/initiative as case study.**

Strength elements of the case study:

- Proplast was established in 1998, by initiative of a group of companies. It was awarded the "label" of innovative clusters and received funding from Regional Government starting from 2008 (year of the Call for proposals for the establishment of innovation clusters of Piemonte Region, co-funded by ERDF funds). So it emerged with a concrete bottom-up approach and it is not the kind of cluster organisation established only under the incentive of possible public funding.
- Proplast has a strong business orientation, coupled with a deep understanding of its specific role and responsibilities as a cluster organisation, operating in a complex sector, challenged by growing competition and growing environmental sustainability requirements.
- Proplast has a good track of international cooperation activities and a good European curriculum, in terms of projects implementation, partners and networking activities.
- The ALPlastics project has been chosen as case study because of its being the step of a process, that led Proplast to be recognized as a reliable interlocutor at European level. The participation to a European project per se has only limited significance if it is not part of a strategic vision (even if not a proper far-sighted strategy).
- ALPlastics is targeted to SMEs needs and, especially the open innovation platform, aims at establishing vertical cooperation inside the plastic and new material production chain. This element is considered to be very important for SMEs operating in emerging sectors, that have stronger needs in terms of business cooperation in new technologies and applications fields.
- ALPlastics is funded by the territorial cooperation programme Alpine Space 2007-2013. All Operational Programmes of the 2007-2013 programming period had not been specifically addressed to cluster organisations (even if they allow and incentive the participation of clusters). Nonetheless Proplast, as many other cluster organisations around Europe, showed a great capacity to benefit from these programmes, using the opportunity offered at trans-regional level as a training to scale up their collaboration at a European dimension.

Gaps identified by the case study exercise:

- Data and information gathered indicate that, despite the great effort dedicated to transnational cooperation, Proplast succeeded better in internationalizing itself as a cluster organisation and less successfully in promoting members' internationalisation. SMEs member of the cluster are very rarely involved in international activities and even hardly initiate directly by themselves.
- During the interview, the cluster representative confirmed that SMEs are very passive regarding international activities, with some exception regarding research projects (especially through 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programmes funding.)
- The lack of a clear and formally agreed internationalisation strategy hinders the development of long-term activities that imply substantial effort in a continuative way (in resources, time, expertise, etc.).

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- The initiative of the Open Innovation Platform can bring some help in stimulating SMEs, but maybe it will be critical to spread the open innovation concept in a context that show very locked-in SMEs.
- Proplast seem much more stronger in its original role as consortium of enterprises more than as cluster organisation.
  - Proplast has showed the capability to follow and anticipate changes, but with low awareness of operating in an emerging field and consequently to adapt its internal skills and the services provided to members to those specific target.

***D. List and description of sources of data and collection methods (interviews, statistical surveys, etc.)***

Part A:  
Web site of the cluster  
Interview

Part B:  
Interview

Part C:  
Web site of the cluster  
Interview

Part D:  
Web site of the cluster  
Interview  
Data provided by the cluster  
Project Newsletters

Part E:  
Web site of the cluster  
Interview

## 2.2 Slovak Case Study: Project AutoNet - Automobilový klaster Západné Slovensko

### **A. Identification of the project/initiative**

1. The project/initiative analyzed was realized through:
  - own funds of the cluster organisation, coming from:
    - Fees of cluster members
    - Revenues for services provided on the market
  - external financial contribution, from:
    - Local/Regional level
    - National level
    - European level
2. Transnational cooperation
  - was the specific aim of the project/initiative
  - resulted from activities aimed at different aims (indirect fallout)
3. Transnational cooperation is referred to
  - Research activities
  - Innovation activities
  - Networking
  - Business (new supplier, new markets exploration, please specify .....)
  - Other (specify .....)
4. Clusters involved in the transnational cooperation are from
  - Europe
    - Central Europe
    - Mediterranean Area
    - Northern Countries
    - Other (specify .....)
  - Asia (specify ...)
  - North America (specify ...)
  - South America (specify ...)
6. Time scale of the project/initiative
  - starting date: 2010**
  - end date: 2013**
  - or  ongoing

### **B. Detailed description of the project or initiative**

The focus of the project resulted from the situation during the economic crisis in 2008, which significantly affected the functioning of companies in the

automotive industry and changed the competitive environment in the sector. Firms are facing more intense competition, and therefore are more intensively engaged in innovation activities and active in finding opportunities to penetrate new markets.

The specific objective of the project AutoNet was to create permanent network of business supporting actors of automotive industries from leading CE regions. This industrial network functional at territorial level aimed to raise the innovation capacities and sustainability of participating regions and the industrial actors represented and supported by the network members. The project focused on the promotion of new regional services based on the exchange of experience inside network, on supporting development of new innovative solutions by supporting creation of trans-regional innovative cooperation and on the involvement of the policy makers at regional, national and EC level. V projekte bolo zapojených 9 partnerov zo siedmich krajín. Project was implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF with the amount of 2,1 mil Eur.

As a major tool to support regional actors, we developed the AutoNet [MatchMaking Database](#). This freely available database collects information about business and supporting bodies in automotive industry in the entire Central Europe region. Apart from the on line matchmaking, series of MatchMaking events and seminars has been organized in different cities in Slovakia, Italy, Germany, Poland, but also Turkey, Ukraine and Russia. Apart from this one of the main outputs the Study on supporting services and policies for Automotive industry has been elaborated in 2011. This document specifies five main directions of effective service support and 18 transferable best practices have been identified by project partners.

### ***C. Description of the cluster***

1. Which is the name of the cluster? **Automobilový klaster Západné Slovensko**

2. In which country is the cluster organisation located? **Slovakia**

3. In which technological/industrial area is the cluster mainly active?

Please choose among:

Aerospace Agro-Food **Automotive** Biotechnology Business & Financial Services  
 Chemical Construction (incl. equipment) Creative Electronics, Electrical  
 Equipment Energy Environment/Green Technologies Footwear and Leather  
 Health Care/Medical Devices ICT Jewellery Logistics Maritime Materials and new  
 Materials Mechatronics Media Metal Processing/Manufacturing Micro- and  
 Nanotechnology Mining (incl. equipment) Optics and Photonics Packaging  
 Plastics Printing Production Technology Railway Security Software

This project is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF

Telecommunications Textile Tourism Transport Infrastructure Wood, Paper, Furniture  
Or specify...

4. Total cluster members: **38**
5. Number of firms cluster members: **29**
6. Number of SMEs cluster members: **NA**
7. Year of establishment of the cluster: **2007**

8. Please paste here the LOGO of the cluster:



9. According to the classification of the different ways of channelling RDI funding through clusters - elaborated in the TACTICS project (see Annex 1) - please tick the level of involvement of the clusters in your country/region:

- Meta-level
- Level 1
- Level 2**
- Level 3**
- Level 4
- Level 5
- Mixed, specify.....

10. Please list the services provided to the cluster members:

- 1 - joint PR
- 2 - information support (funding opportunities)
- 3 - education
- 4 - networking

11. Please tick the services provided to the cluster members for the internationalisation:

- Support in developing the internationalisation strategies
- Support in developing a marketing&branding strategies
- Providing information about relevant markets and local trends
- Providing additional information (legislation, tax rules, local funding opportunities, local experts, inter-cultural behaviour, typical pitfalls, etc.)
- Identifying appropriate partners
- Organising access to relevant key actors / initiating first business contacts in foreign countries
- Advertising / selling the products of the SMEs
- Organising business missions
- Representing the companies at trade fairs
- Raising of funds to reduce the investments of the firms for internationalisation
- Other (specify...).

12. According to the cluster analyzed, which are the specificities of a cluster organisation operating in an emerging industry sectors?

The beginnings of a cluster were not easy. Cluster members were not accustomed to being part of such an organization and did not know what the expectations they may have. The primary problem was the establishment of a cluster organization and to set the key operative issues such as management, personnel issues, etc. Establishment of cluster organization was financially and organizationally supported by the City of Trnava and the Trnava Self Governing Region. However during the early years the organization had to cope with important financial issues. Membership fees alone were not sufficient to cover operation costs, and therefore the organization was forced to raise its own funds. The aim of the first years of the organization was therefore to self-stabilize the operation of the organization rather than providing tailor made services for members. Similarly, the member companies did not precise expectations and for them the membership was a form of learning of the inter-company collaboration.

Activities of cluster organizations were focused mainly on establishing cooperation with similar organizations in Slovakia and abroad. The organization was mainly engaged in providing information services for members and organising conferences and seminars. Member companies and organizations have more neutral than very positive feedback on the activities of the organization. Organization is gradually moving towards more active provision of services to the members (e.g. education, joint purchase), but as yet it is too early to assess this trend.

13. Description of the experiences of the cluster in transnational cooperation.

Cluster organization was very active in the international projects from the very beginning of its operation. Among the first projects was the project

[Autoclusters](#) (2009 - 2012), which was a joint project of cluster organizations from Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia and Austria, regional development organizations from Italy, Hungary and technical universities from Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania. The project focused on exploring the possibilities of innovation cooperation, transfer of technology and knowledge transfer in the automotive industry. Several innovative pilot projects of SMEs and universities have been elaborated within the project. Automotive Cluster of Western Slovakia was the leader of the project. The project was funded by the Transnational Cooperation Programme South East Europe with the budget of 1.64 million. Euro.

The second group of projects was supported by the EU cross-border programmes. The first project - [AC Centrope](#) was funded by Cross border cooperation programme SR - Austria with the amount of 910,000 Euros. The project aimed to support the development of the automotive industry in Centrope region and to promote the region as an automotive heart of EU. Another project was [Autoplast](#) (2009 - 2011), funded within the Cross border cooperation programme SR - Czech Republic. It aimed to promote cooperation in the field of plastic products for the automotive industry in Trnava (Slovakia) and the Zlín region (CR), to exchange experience in the field of education, research and development of materials and technologies. The last similar project was a project Clusters Without Borders (2010 - 2011) supported by Cross border cooperation programme SR - Hungary. On the Hungarian side the the partner was the Chamber of Commerce Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (BOKIK), which includes automotive cluster NOHAC in Miskolc. The aim was to map the enterprises in the automotive industry and promote the development of cooperation between firms through conferences, exhibitions and co-promoting activities.

Associated companies in the auto cluster yet did not consider international cooperation as a top priority objective. Companies are mainly focused so far on dynamic local markets. In addition, in the case of branches of foreign companies, their international activities are conducted through parent organizations. Internationalization of cluster organization is therefore not yet met with considerable interest by the firms. Overall, it could be assessed that intense international engagement of cluster organizations led to information overload of companies and firms faced the problems to select important ones. On the other hand, companies especially appreciated the possibility to identify potential new markets. One of the important activities from this perspective was matchmaking activities. This is a B2B activity that served to mediate export and trade opportunities for the company. The biggest success had matchmaking activities outside Europe countries (Turkey, Ukraine), and especially in Russia. Within a project an on line match making database was established, which currently includes 495 companies.

14. According to the cluster organisation, how companies perceive transnational cooperation?

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Important, mainly from the perspective of enlarging business opportunities and access to new markets.

15. Please list and describe all the concrete actions undertaken by the cluster to facilitate transnational cooperation for their cluster members

- 1 – matchmaking events
- 2 – conferences and workshops
- 3 – quality standards of services.

16. Is there a strategy for transnational cooperation or internationalisation being developed and implemented by the cluster organisation?

- No
- Yes, please describe it...

17. Does the cluster organisation have a mandate or agreed task to support its members in facilitating transnational/international cooperation (stated in the association contract signed by members, stated in the statute/charter of the cluster organisation, etc.)?

- No
- Yes, in the Memorandum of understanding.

18. Does the cluster have specifically designated staff appointed to support transnational cooperation and internationalisation? How many?

- No
- Yes, please indicate how many: 5 people (everybody is engaged in)

19. Does the cluster have any monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of your internationalisation activities?

- No
- Yes, please briefly describe it...

20. How do the cluster organisation measure/assess the impact of internationalisation services or transnational activities offered to cluster members?

- No measurement/assessment
- Yes ( **only within regular project reporting, not formalized**)
  - Number of contacts established
  - Number of foreign experts / talents attracted
  - Number of cooperation agreements
  - Number of financial cooperation
  - Number of new R&D&I projects
  - Number of new projects initiated (non R&D&I)
  - Access to new technologies, products, services or processes
  - Increased turnover of SMEs generated in target markets
  - Others, please specify...

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21. Has the cluster been subject to external assessment, benchmark exercise, evaluation, label process? (Please describe)

Yes - benchmark assessment. Organized by the Slovak Agency for Energetics and Innovation.

***D. Detailed description of the impact of the project/initiative on the cluster organisation and on the cluster members, including quantitative and qualitative data and how they were measured (interviews, questionnaire, data from balance sheet, etc.)***

By now the project has not been object of the formal impact assessment focused on the internationalisation. Project AutoNet has been finalized only few months ago (in April 2013). The project has been only formally evaluated from the funding agency.

***E. Detailed description of the reasons that motivated the choice of the project/initiative as case study.***

Automotive cluster – West Slovakia is the well performing cluster organization and cover all methodology expectations as well as selected project bring high value added to all cluster members. Cluster is being considered to perspective for the sector development and automotive is an important part of the Smart Specialization Strategy that is currently setting up.

***F. List and description of sources of data and collection methods (interviews, statistical surveys, etc.)***

Part A:  
desk study: web page of the cluster organisation [www.autoklaster.sk](http://www.autoklaster.sk) and web pages of the projects  
<http://www.autonet-central.eu>  
<http://www.autoclusters.eu/>  
<http://accentrope.com/>  
<http://www.autoplast.eu/>

Part B:  
Field interview with 2 representatives from the cluster organization Autoklaster Západné Slovensko

Part C:

Part D:

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Part E:



## **2.3 The Polish Case Study: Project CARE – Aviation Valley**

### **A. Identification of the project/initiative**

1. The project/initiative analyzed was realized through:
  - own funds of the cluster organisation, coming from:
    - Fees of cluster members
    - Revenues for services provided on the market
  - external financial contribution, from:
    - Local/Regional level
    - National level
    - European level
2. Transnational cooperation
  - was the specific aim of the project/initiative
  - resulted from activities aimed at different aims (indirect fallout)
3. Transnational cooperation is referred to
  - Research activities
  - Innovation activities
  - Networking
  - Business (new supplier, new markets exploration, please specify:
    - new possibilities of production,
    - new markets – innovative solutions
  - Other (specify technology adjustment to stipulations of Horizon 2020)
4. Clusters involved in the transnational cooperation are from
  - Europe
    - Central Europe
    - Mediterranean Area
    - Northern Countries
    - Other (specify Ekisehir Aviation Cluster, Turkey)
  - Asia (specify ...)
  - North America (specify ...)
  - South America (specify ...)
6. Time scale of the project/initiative
  - starting date: 01.01.2012
  - end date: .....
  - or  ongoing

## **B. Detailed description of the project or initiative**

### **CARE – Clear aerospace Region – a project for the Aeronautics Research Agenda**

#### **General Objectives:**

Green technologies are key competitive advantages of future air transport systems. Major environmental challenges are at stake in:

- more energy efficient airborne systems (greener engines, lighter aero-structures, alternative fuels, more electric aircraft equipment, etc.),
- eco-design (improving the environmental impact of the whole product life cycle, with the manufacturing, maintenance and recycling of aircraft in full compliance with the REACH directive),
- greener air traffic management (capabilities for "green" trajectories and missions, and improved ground operations to fully exploit the benefits of the Single European Sky while reducing disturbances around airports),
- multimodal transport system (the territorial integration of air transport into an efficient and green multimodal transport system).

The CARE project was established to improve R&D networking already instigated at regional level through research-driven clusters and to increase the competitiveness of these regions in the field of Green Aircraft Transportation by:

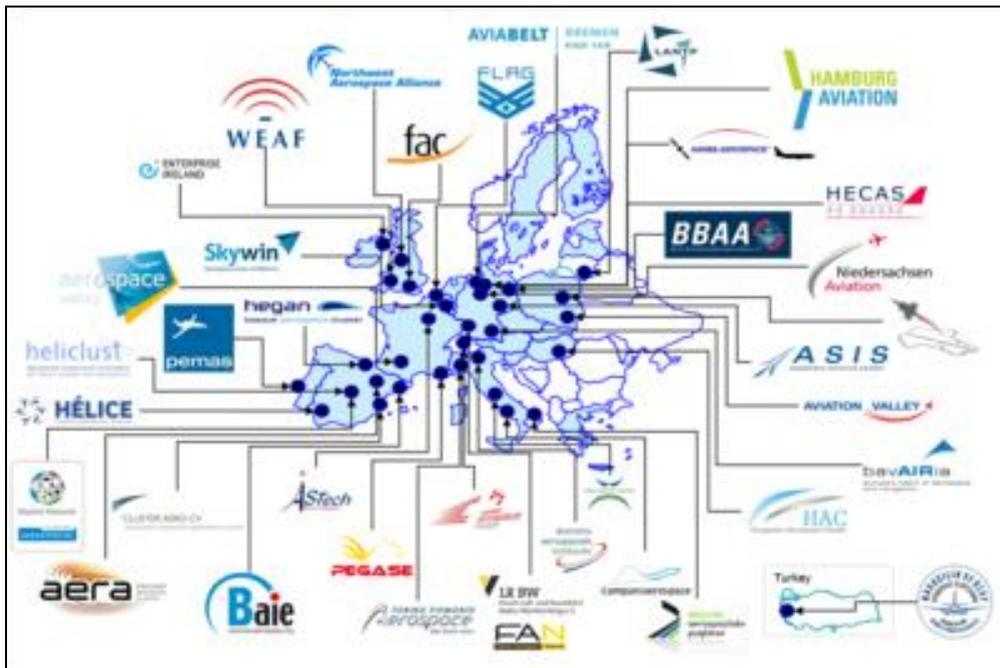
- enhancing more effective investments in R&D at regional level
- stimulating the setting-up of additional regional research-orientated clusters (mentoring activity)
- catalysing synergies and public private partnerships both on finance and research agendas standpoints at the European scale,

The CARE proposal is being performed by a consortium of mature aeronautics research-oriented regional clusters gathering large and small enterprises, research actors and local authorities and two less-mature aeronautics clusters, to be mentored. The CARE (Clean Aerospace Regions) - arose out of the work of nine aviation clusters and a consulting company within the EACP (European Aerospace Cluster Partnership) which are: Aerospace Valley (Project Coordination) - France, Hamburg Aviation (Work Package Leader Dissemination) - Germany, **Aviation Valley - Poland**, BavAIRia - Germany, Capital High Tech - France, Ceipiemonte (Centro Estero per l'Internazionalizzazione) - Italy, ESAC (Eskisehir Sanayi Odasi) - Turkey, HEGAN (Asociación Cluster de Aeronáutica y Espacio del País Vasco) - Spain,

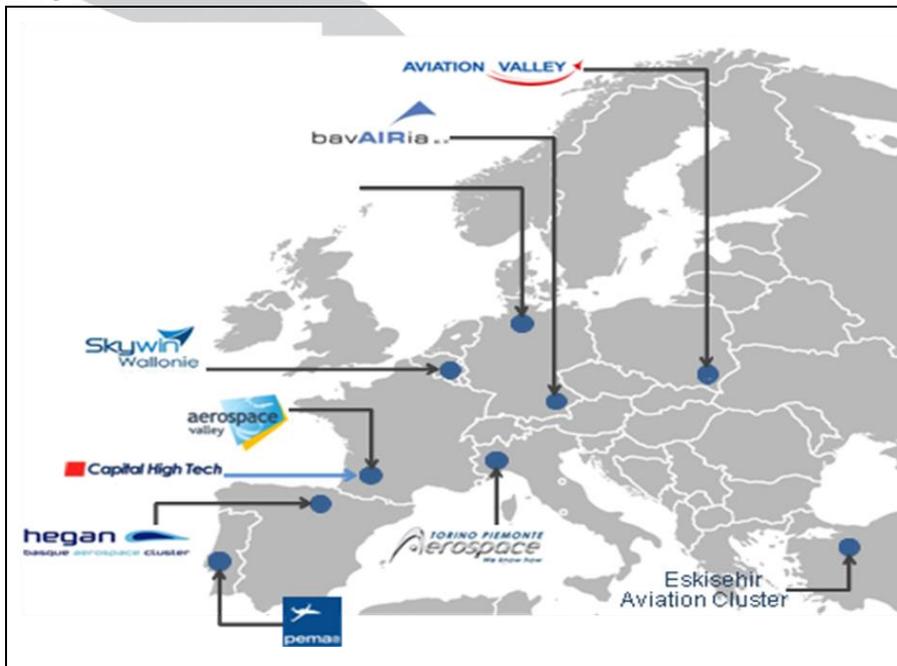
This project is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF

PEMAS (Portuguese SME for Aerospace Industry) – Portugal, Skywin Wallonie – Belgium.

CARE is funded by the European Commission. Its efforts are aligned with the EU initiatives “Vision 2020” and “Flightpath 2050”. Together, the partners are working on a Joint Action Plan with the goal of promoting regional research in environmentally efficient aviation technologies. One source of support is the European Commission’s “Clean Sky” Joint Technology Initiative.



**EACP**



CARE Project

**Detailed objectives :**

**Objective 1:**

To build a **baseline directory database** of minimum 300 R&D actors from European research-driven clusters ; the strengths for producing and using knowledge for the design, development and operations of greener aviation and traffic management are outlined.

**Objective 2:**

To identify those **areas of common interest** on which transnational cooperation between research driven clusters should be fostered in order to enable economic development from more and better R&D investments at regional level in the field of Green Air Transportation.

**Objective 3:**

To build a **Joint Action Plan (JAP)** which is validated and supported by all regions and whose financial sustainability is based on the reinforcement of public private partnerships and the mobilization of European, national and regional funds

**Objective 4:**

To ensure the **dissemination of this JAP among and inside 30+ regional clusters** and to have started fostering cross fertilization and partnership building among the various players (research, finance, industry, regional authorities and innovation intermediaries) at both the regional and the European scales.

**Objective 5:**

To search for all possible **financing sources** that could be mobilized to support the implementation of the JAP (structural funds, FP7, CIP, etc.)

**Objective 6:**

To **support six European regions** with a less developed profile aiming to support their capacity in setting-up and developing regional research-driven clusters.

**Objective 7:**

To have an input of about **10 joint proposals to European funding instruments**; these proposals should lean on the valuable contribution of regional actors to the development of new technologies or innovations with strong expected economic impact at the regional levels involved.

**Objective 8:**



To internationally **promote** the **worldwide competitiveness** of the regional actors involved in the clusters in the BRIC countries Brazil, Russia, India and China.

**Current results :**

- A map of challenges for regional economic development
- An evaluation of RTD policies evolution and impact on innovation
- A synthesis of the European and international aeronautics context
- The constitution of a European CARE database composed of:
  - 177 companies from the 7 countries
  - 62 laboratories or universities
 (With an objective of 300 R&D actors for 2014)

**The on-going tasks**

Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats:

- Cross-checking the previous State of Play and the challenges that the aviation sector faces
  - At a regional level, each cluster refines the initial findings to transform them into capacities or necessities to seize the opportunities or mitigate the risks
- In a future step, analyze how joining the strengths of the CARE partnership will build a stronger "meta-cluster"

**C. Description of the cluster**

22. What is the name of the cluster?

**Aviation Valley Association**

23. In which country is the cluster organisation located?

**Poland**

24. In which technological/industrial area is the cluster mainly active?

Please choose among:

**Aerospace** Agro-Food Automotive Biotechnology Business & Financial Services Chemical Construction (incl. equipment) Creative Electronics, Electrical Equipment Energy Environment/Green Technologies Footwear and Leather Health Care/Medical Devices ICT Jewellery Logistics Maritime Materials and new Materials Mechatronics Media Metal Processing/Manufacturing Micro- and Nanotechnology Mining (incl. equipment) Optics and Photonics Packaging Plastics Printing Production Technology Railway Security Software Telecommunications Textile Tourism Transport Infrastructure Wood, Paper, Furniture

Or specify...

25. Total cluster members:

**112**

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26. Number of firms cluster members:  
**83**

27. Number of SMEs cluster members:  
**78**

28. Year of establishment of the cluster:  
**2003**

29. Please paste here the LOGO of the cluster:



30. According to the classification of the different ways of channelling RDI funding through clusters - elaborated in the TACTICS project (see Annex 1) - please tick the level of involvement of the clusters in your country/region:

- Meta-level
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4
- Level 5
- Mixed, specify.....

31. Please list the services provided to the cluster members:

- 1 - Develop relationship with other European centers of the aerospace industry
- 2 - The organization and development of a low cost supply chain
- 3 - The creation of favorable conditions in order to enhance the development of aerospace industry enterprises in this region
- 4 - The further development of aerospace research, aptitude and skill
- 5 - The cooperation with universities of technology, which would promote new ideas and scientific research within the aerospace industry.
- 6 - The promotion of the Polish aerospace industry
- 7 - The protection of enterprise and businesses in the aerospace industry
- 8 - The influence on the Polish government's economic policy towards the aerospace industry and its domain

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32. Please tick the services provided to the cluster members for the internationalisation:

- Support in developing the internationalisation strategies
- Support in developing a marketing & branding strategies
- Providing information about relevant markets and local trends
- Providing additional information (legislation, tax rules, local funding opportunities, local experts, inter-cultural behaviour, typical pitfalls, etc.)
- Identifying appropriate partners
- Organising access to relevant key actors / initiating first business contacts in foreign countries
- Advertising / selling the products of the SMEs
- Organising business missions
- Representing the companies at trade fairs
- Raising of funds to reduce the investments of the firms for internationalisation
- Other (specify – attracting new investors, cooperation with local government in a due to use more formal channels for international promotion and cooperation, organising international events in Rzeszów).

33. According to the cluster analyzed, which are the specificities of a cluster organisation operating in an emerging industry sectors?

For some reasons, aviation industry could still be seen as an emerging industry. The main factors which are specific for this industry are:

- necessity of functioning on a global market, aerospace R&D activity and cooperation between companies within supply chain based on high technology exacts sharing the knowledge and know-how;
- high expenditures on investments needed because of precision industry specificity what is also strictly linked with high risk of this kind of enterprises

Effective functioning in emerging industry generates a special need of intensive cooperation between industry and science. Aviation Valley has established and developed model kind of such cooperation.

For several years, an aviation manufacturers meet regularly with representatives of collaborating with them the best Polish technical universities and centers research. In order to effectively develop these relationships established the Center of Advanced Technology "AERONET-Aviation Valley", which currently has several companies in the industrial cluster and several universities and institutions of R & D.

34. Description of the experiences of the cluster in transnational cooperation. Activity dedicated to cluster internationalisation is the high priority of Aviation Valley association. Its symbolic dimension had reflection in a fact that the very first version of cluster's website was created in English version. Later on it was translated into Polish language.

At the origins of regional aviation industry internationalization WSK "PZL" Rzeszów was transformed into joint venture company with shares of Pratt & Whittney. Afterwards, Pratt & Whittney started to finance Aviation Valley cluster's activities. Association was supported by 300 000 USD divided into installments paid within the period of 2003 - 2008 years. Last years, 90% of financing comes from European Union Projects. In this respect, it might be said that internationalization exist on organizational level as well. Currently, 3 of 4 projects under implementation are being realized through international partnership. It is worth to mention that Aviation Valley is responsible for establishing and sustaining □Sectoral Contact Point of 7. UE Framework Program - the Aviation Valley Association performs the function of the Sector Contact Point of the Polish Aviation Technological Platform.

Aviation Valley is the most recognizable Polish cluster at international level and one of the few of the most recognizable aerospace clusters from European Union worldwide. Reputation of both cluster and its participants translate among others into the concrete decisions of the European Commission and the Secretariat of the Central Europe Program which confer significant roles to SGPPL Aviation Valley in projects on mentoring and optimization of other European clusters (CNCB Central Europe and CARE FP7 projects). Aviation Valley is also invited to be a part of the most prestigious presentation of key clusters, both in terms of importance for the global aviation sector, and to the European cluster policy, (e.g. in Silicon Valley, in the European Parliament, during Committee of the Regions of the European Union Inter Cluster in Paris, Innovation Forum in Montreal, Aerospace Summit in Seattle). Aviation Valley was also the initiator and one of the founding members of the European networks of clusters Air Wings for Regions, which currently brings together nearly 40 clusters from EU and evolved into a pan-European platform under the name EACP - European Aerospace Clusters Partnership.

35. According to the cluster organisation, how companies perceive transnational cooperation?

(**Important**, relatively important, not enough skills to pursue it, etc. Please provide explanation.)

Aviation Valley Association helps with improving strengthness of supplier chain by collecting new companies in region (new investors) and by establishment of new linkages with already existed companies. This also results in technology transfer, which process is also supported by activities of Aeronet - consortium of science institutions, which was established by Aviation Valley. Comprehensive activity of association results in gathering new markets for concrete companies within the cluster. Extraordinary, Aviation Valley Association is also actively engaged in creating completed educational system starting from the level of youngest kids until the level of study faculties, according to the needs of entrepreneurs from cluster.

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36. Please list and describe all the concrete actions undertaken by the cluster to facilitate transnational cooperation for their cluster members

- 1 – participation in Paris Air Show and Berlin Air Show – co-financed by City Office of Rzeszów
- 2 – inward and outward company missions
- 3 – membership in European Enterprise Network
- 4 – membership in Association of Polish Aviation Industry
- 5 – membership in EACP

37. Is there a strategy for transnational cooperation or internationalisation being developed and implemented by the cluster organisation?

No

Yes, please describe it...

There is no special strategy for transnational cooperation written as a separate document. But the main strategy put strong emphasis on this aspect.

Strategy of cluster and programme documents present vision and mission of cluster and methods of their realisation. Action plans are being modified and updated by the board of directors and cluster office. Then it is put forward for consultation for members during their General Meeting.

The mission of cluster refers to achieving a constant competitive advantage on global market, promotion and development of Eastern Poland.

The vision basis on well organized and effectively working sectoral economy network – Aviation Valley, which by international cooperation among the others, will be able to realize important common activities in a due to create identifiable regional brand, which will be well-known in Poland, Europe and worldwide.

The goals of clusters include:

- chain of suppliers optimization (e.g. through attracting new investors to Rzeszów and region),
- establishment of purchase group which enables companies/members of the Aviation Valley Association to take active part in trade events and economic missions
- development of cooperation with other clusters and aviation organisations from other countries

38. Does the cluster organisation have a mandate or agreed task to support its members in facilitating transnational/international cooperation (stated in the association contract signed by members, stated in the statute/charter of the cluster organisation, etc.)?

No

Yes, please describe where and how it is formalized...

There is no direct stipulation concerning representation of members, but in a Statute there are following statements related to this case:

- Promotion of Polish aviation industry abroad



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- Initiating of cooperation with foreign aviation associations and participation in international aviation organisations
- Representing association during trade fairs and events, seminars, conferences and symposiums

39. Does the cluster have specifically designated staff appointed to support transnational cooperation and internationalisation? How many?

- No
- Yes, please indicate how many ...

There is no special position dedicated to international affairs. This is an effect of small number of employees. Nevertheless, down to a fact that internationalisation is a high priority of cluster, all workers of cluster's office are intensively and permanently engaged in transnational cooperation. Their work agreements cover relevant stipulations. Extraordinary, during some events they are supported by other representatives of company members who participate on behalf of Aviation Valley and their own companies.

40. Does the cluster have any monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of your internationalisation activities?

- No
- Yes, please briefly describe it...

41. How do the cluster organisation measure/assess the impact of internationalisation services or transnational activities offered to cluster members?

- No measurement/assessment
- Yes
  - Number of contacts established
  - Number of foreign experts / talents attracted
  - Number of cooperation agreements
  - Number of financial cooperation
  - Number of new R&D&I projects
  - Number of new projects initiated (non R&D&I)
  - Access to new technologies, products, services or processes
  - Increased turnover of SMEs generated in target markets
  - Others, please specify...

42. Has the cluster been subject to external assessment, benchmark exercise, evaluation, label process? (Please describe)

Aviation Valley as 1 of 35 clusters participated in Cluster benchmarking in Poland - a project carried out by Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) funded by European Social Fund under Human Capital Operational Programme, Sub-measure 2.1.3 "Developing human resources through knowledge promotion, innovation transfer and dissemination".

Aviation Valley was surveyed twice: in 2010 and 2012 year. Report on last edition of benchmarking presents good practices of Aviation Valley as exemplaries for other clusters. 1<sup>st</sup> regards to development of cooperation within cluster. 2<sup>nd</sup> regards to the promotion of cluster at international arena. Aviation Valley is described there as the most popular Polish cluster at international level and one of the most popular aviation cluster of UE on the world.

***D. Detailed description of the impact of the project/initiative on the cluster organisation and on the cluster members, including quantitative and qualitative data and how they were measured (interviews, questionnaire, data from balance sheet, etc. )***

The project is still running.

***E. Detailed description of the reasons that motivated the choice of the project/initiative as case study.***

Aeronet consortium includes University of Technology, University of Rzeszow, Institute of Aviation, Institute Of Fluid-Flow Machinery, Institute of Fundamental Technological Research, Air Force Institute of Technology, Czestochowa University of Technology, Lublin University of Technology, Lodz University of Technology, Silesian University of Technology, Warsaw University of Technology. First part of the name – “aeronet” regards to the network of Polish aviation. Second part – “aviation valley” represents strictly business dimension of this initiative. In this case CAT Aeronet is the best shaped platform dedicated to implementation of international projects.

In general, effective cooperation with R&D institutions within aerospace sector exacts to come out of national borders because new technologies are global and requires collaboration with scientists worldwide. The Centre of Advanced Technologies “AERONET - Aviation Valley” was established to rise to this challenge. Aeronet consortium consist of Aviation Valley Association, Rzeszow. The project proves high level of Aviation Valley cluster development. The CARE proposal is being performed by a consortium of mature aeronautics research-oriented regional clusters gathering large and small enterprises, research actors and local authorities and two less-mature aeronautics clusters to be mentored.

The CARE project will reinforce the R&D networking already instigated at regional level through research-driven clusters and will increase the competitiveness of these regions in the field of Green Aircraft Transportation by:

- enhancing more effective investments in R&D at regional level,
- stimulating the setting-up of additional regional research-orientated clusters (mentoring activity)
- catalyzing synergies and public private partnerships both on finance and research agendas standpoints at the European scale.

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Its efforts are aligned with the EU initiatives "Vision 2020" and "Flightpath 2050". One source of support is the European Commission's "Clean Sky" Joint Technology Initiative.

***F. List and description of sources of data and collection methods (interviews, statistical surveys, etc.)***

Part A: <http://www.dolinalotnicza.pl/>, <http://www.care-aero.eu>, Benchmarking of clusters in Poland – edition 2012, PARP 2012, Clusters in Poland, PARP 2012, Statute of Aviation Valley, <http://www.aeronet.pl>, <http://www.wskrz.com/>,

Part B: <http://www.dolinalotnicza.pl/>, interviews with cluster association representatives – Andrzej Rybka, Jolanta Skrzypkowska

Part D:

Part E:

## **Section 3: Conclusive remarks**

### **3.1 General overview of data**

The three case studies selected for the exercise by the involved partners are:

- for the City of Rzeszow (Poland): **CARE project** (Clear Aerospace Regions), implemented by the cluster Aviation Valley Association
- for Piemonte Region (Italy): **ALPlastics project**, implemented by the cluster PROPLAST
- for SIEA (Slovakia): **AutoNet** project, implemented by the cluster Automobilový klaster Západné Slovensko.

The three cases clearly show the great importance that European funds have in supporting clusters collaborations, since all the three concern projects supported in some way by European funds.

In all three cases transnational cooperation is referred to innovation-related activities (followed by networking and business).

The objectives of the three initiatives are respectively:

- "The objective of the ALPlastics network is to promote a public-private cooperation and create proper conditions for open and strategic innovation in plastic clusters, strengthening the related economic sector. ALPlastics have been designed to help Cluster organisations to play their role at the centre of the "cluster's triple helix system" and promote activities that can harness the resources and talents of industry, government and academia, to develop practical solutions toward strategic innovation".
- "The specific objective of the project AutoNet was to create permanent network of business supporting actors of automotive industries from leading CE regions. (...) The project focused on the promotion of new regional services based on the exchange of experience inside network, on supporting development of new innovative solutions by supporting creation of trans-regional innovative cooperation and on the involvement of the policy makers at regional, national and EC level".
- "The CARE project was established to improve R&D networking already instigated at regional level through research-driven clusters and to increase the competitiveness of these regions in the field of Green Aircraft Transportation by:
  - o enhancing more effective investments in R&D at regional level
  - o stimulating the setting-up of additional regional research-orientated clusters (mentoring activity)

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- o catalysing synergies and public private partnerships both on finance and research agendas standpoints at the European scale”

The three projects analyzed are all on-going.

Regarding clusters characteristics, the situation is quite differentiated:

	Proplast	Automobilový klaster Zápavné Slovensko	Aviation Valley
Sectors/domain	materials/new materials, plastics	automotive	aerospace
Year of establishment of the cluster	1998	2007	2003
Total cluster members	211	38	112
Number of firms cluster members	186	29	83
Number of SMEs cluster members	151	NA	78
Services provided to cluster members	1 - technical services: testing, processing, packaging, product and process engineering 2 - training courses at all levels 3 - applied research facilities 4 - technology matching 5 - recruiting.	1 - joint PR 2 - information support (funding opportunities) 3 - education 4 - networking	1 - develop relationship whit the European aerospace industry 2 - support for the realisation of low cost supply chain 3 - support the development of aerospace industry enterprises in this region 4 - research support 5 - Cooperation with universities 6 - Promotion of the Polish aerospace industry 7 - Protection of enterprise and businesses in the aerospace industry 8 - Influence on the Polish

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			government's economic policy towards the aerospace industry and its domain
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Regarding internationalisation, the services offered by the three cluster organisations to their cluster members are the following:

	Proplast	Automobilový klaster Západne Slovensko	Aviation Valley
Support in developing the internationalisation strategies		x	x
Support in developing a marketing&branding strategies		x	x
Providing information about relevant markets and local trends			x
Providing additional information (legislation, tax rules, local funding opportunities, local experts, inter-cultural behaviour, typical pitfalls, etc.)			x
Identifying appropriate partners	x	x	x
Organising access to relevant key actors / initiating first business contacts in foreign countries	x	x	x
Advertising / selling the products of the SMEs		x	x
Organising business missions	x	x	x
Representing the companies at trade fairs		x	x
Raising of funds to reduce the investments of the firms for internationalisation			x
Other (specify...)			x

All the three case studies reveal a good track in transnational cooperation of the concerned cluster organisations, ranging from the participation to transnational and European projects, to extensive and rooted international activities and relationships.

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The companies member of the clusters analyzed, all perceive transnational cooperation as very important for business expansion, to access to new markets, to attract foreign investments. Some of them anyway express concerns about the risks connected to the exposure of the firms know-how.

The actions concretely undertaken by the three cluster organisations to facilitate transnational cooperation are:

- Proplast:
  - Participation to international fairs in representation of members
  - Contact with similar clusters
  - Participation to business missions
- Automobilový klaster Západne Slovensko
  - matchmaking events
  - conferences and workshops
  - quality standards of services
- Aviation Valley
  - participation in Paris Air Show and Berlin Air Show – co-financed by City Office of Rzeszów
  - inward and outward company missions
  - membership in European Enterprise Network
  - membership in Association of Polish Aviation Industry
  - membership in EACP.

None of the three clusters has a formalized internationalisation strategy, even if an agreement, or a MoU or the cluster general operating strategy address this aspect, giving a mandate to the cluster organisations to support their members in transnational cooperation and internationalisation.

Inside the clusters organisation there is no staff specifically designated to the internationalisation purpose nor a monitoring system to measure progress and impact of the internationalisation activities.

The three clusters have been subject to some kind of external assessment or benchmark evaluation. Proplast participated in the ESCA benchmark, obtaining a bronze label. Both Automobilový klaster and Aviation Valley had been assessed by a national wide benchmarking.

To the question regarding the specificity of a cluster operating in an emerging industry sector, the answers obtained are quite differentiated.

In the case of Proplast, the transformation of the plastics sectors, pushed forward a radical transformation of the plastics industry, with a strong renovation in terms of materials and, consequently, of production processes. The greening of the industry and the emergence of clean technologies offered good opportunities but also brought a more severe competition in the plastics sectors. In this scenario Proplast affirmed “emerging technologies do not automatically create emerging industries”, stressing the role of a cluster

organisation as initiator and supporter of cooperation activities along both the value chain and among different sectors.

Automobilový klaster case study reveals the importance for a cluster organisation to strengthen its operative capacities to better address members' needs. Well-established and effective cluster organisations can really make the difference in supporting emerging industries, succeeding in providing tailor made services.

Aviation Valley position regarding this topic is strictly related to the globalisation trends of the aviation industry, whose R&D intensity requires global scale cooperation in high technology, know-how and knowledge. Aviation Valley specifically stresses the importance of intensive cooperation between industry and science and the cooperation model successfully established along years.

### **3.2 General conclusions targeted to cluster practitioners**

In terms of general findings, there is agreement across the three case studies on some elements that can contribute to the knowledge of the group of practitioners targeted by the exercise. The group of practitioners includes policy makers, public administration managers, experts from innovation agencies and intermediate bodies for the economic development, working in the different partner organisations in the field of clusters policies and cluster programmes.

Since the specific objective of the exercise was to contribute to their knowledge by exploring the role of cluster organisations in transnational cooperation in emerging industry sectors, the case studies addressed two main features:

1. cluster organisations role as facilitator for transnational cooperation
2. cluster organisations activities performed to increase transnational cooperation.

1. Regarding **cluster organisations role as facilitator for transnational cooperation**, a number of common findings can be reported:

#### **Experiences, strategies of the clusters in transnational cooperation**

- The three case studies confirm how business network and cooperation have become progressively more important in the internationalisation processes. The all three cluster organisations show an increase in their activities at least in the European scenario, from the creation of the cluster organisation till now.

- Obviously this increased activism is also connected to the stage in their life-cycle. Each stage of development of a cluster answer different needs and different focuses and so, according to the literature, well-established clusters should be better prepared and equipped to go international than clusters at early stage of growth. The older cluster organisation among the cases analyzed, Proplast, seems to be on the right track, having progressively

increased its collaboration activities over years. Aviation Valley, even if “younger” than Proplast, was set up with a strong international orientation since its beginnings, and so its activities are much more projected internationally than the other two clusters. Automobilový klaster is now an established cluster organisation, but it admitted that the first years of operation had been mainly dedicated to the consolidation of the organisation itself, more than to providing services (including internationalisation services) to its members.

- The three cluster organisations show strong experiences at European level but comparable results are not achieved in internationalisation process. Most of the efforts are focused on promotion activities, participation to fairs and international events.

### **Mandate to support transnational cooperation of members.**

- None of the cluster organisation has a formalized internationalisation strategy even if all highlight that they received an informal mandate from their members to support internationalisation processes (stipulated in the Statute or a Memorandum of understanding or the cluster strategy). The literature on clusters proved that clusters act more successfully in the international context, if they have a corresponding strategy and implement it consistently. On the basis of such an internationalisation strategy, specific measures can be implemented which can bring better results that in cases where internationalisation consists of uncoordinated individual measures.

- Another interesting common feature is that all three projects analyzed aim at creating a database or a platform mapping enterprises and gathering information on enterprises and/or relevant technologies for the concerned sectors and covering different countries. It can be derived that the cluster organisations do feel responsible for internationalisation and external cooperation of their members, putting in place initiatives that go beyond the standard services provided by clusters to their members.

2. Regarding **cluster organisations activities performed to increase transnational cooperation**, the following findings can be reported:

### **Concrete actions of the clusters in transnational cooperation**

- According to the experiences here reported, it seems that the benefit of the cluster organisations active in European programmes are more evident than the companies benefits, especially in terms of advancement forward internationalisation. From the case studies reported, the “spillover” mechanism from clusters internationalisation to firms internationalisation cannot be derived and cluster organisation themselves do not provide clear information on this point.

- Considering the emerging industries issue<sup>1</sup>, some interesting points can be found in the cases studies.

- A first peculiar aspect is the different notion of emerging industry showed by the cluster organisations. In the case of Aviation Valley, aviation is considered as an emerging industry due to the necessity of functioning on a global market, to the high technology intensity of the sector, the strong competition based on research and innovation and the high expenditure on investment needed. In the case of Proplast the specificity of an emerging industry cluster is ascribed to its structure (strong business orientation along with a solid R&D component), the capacity of the cluster to catalyze cooperation among cluster members and outside the cluster and the need to provide high level services continuously updated.
- A second interesting aspect is the emphasis put on the nature and intensity of interactions and cooperation among the cluster members that acquire a special importance for emerging industries. The role of clusters as initiators/facilitators of cooperation activities is considered critical for survival and success of emerging industries.
- Last but not least, the three clusters stressed the special need of intensive cooperation between industry and science, not just internally but at international level too, in order to assure state-of-the-art technologies and innovations and be able to face international competition.

- There is agreement throughout the three studies that business network and cooperation have become progressively more important in the internationalisation processes.

Regarding the projects analyzed, all aims at promoting networking:

- ALPlastics project trying to support business opportunities for SMEs in terms of technology and application field
- CARE project pursuing closer cooperation between the aerospace sector and R&D institutions at global level (since new technologies and know-how are global and require collaboration worldwide)
- AutoNet project supporting the creation of a permanent business network of automotive industries.

### **Services offered and staff dedicated to transnational cooperation**

- The three cluster organisations see themselves as a powerful instrument for sustaining transnational collaboration and internationalisation of affiliated companies and perceive the services offered for internationalisation as an added value. The result of the case studies show that the services provided exceed the scope of conventional support, such as promotions trips and participation in fairs.

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<sup>1</sup> As indicated in the Application Form, clusters chosen for the case study must be active in one of the emerging sectors identified by activity 4.1.

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- The three cluster organisations analyzed offer a wide range of support services for the internationalisation but surprisingly the financing issue has not been raised. Among other common barriers to internationalisation (especially for SMEs), financing is usually quoted as key issue hindering more determined and aggressive actions.

- In none of the cluster organisations, there is staff dedicated to transnational cooperation and internationalisation, even if all admit that the staff usually provide this kind of support. It can also be noted that none of the clusters has a monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of the internationalisation activities. The Aviation Valley and the Automobilový klaster however try to measure and assess the impact of the internationalisation services through periodic reporting.

The table below summarizes these findings and possible implications for the target group (group of practitioners that includes policy makers, public administration managers, experts from innovation agencies and intermediate bodies for the economic development, working in the different partner organisations in the field of clusters policies and cluster programmes).



**Theoretical proposition 1:**

Cluster organisations activities performed to increase transnational cooperation

Variables	Case Studies evidence	Practical conclusions for practitioners
Experiences, strategies of the clusters in transnational cooperation	<p>- The three case studies confirm how business network and cooperation have become progressively more important in the internationalisation processes. The all three cluster organisations show an increase in their activities at least in the European scenario, from the creation of the cluster organisation till now.</p> <p>- Obviously this increased activism is also connected to the stage in their life-cycle. Each stage of development of a cluster answer different needs and different focuses and so, according to the literature, well-established clusters should be better prepared and equipped to go international than clusters at early stage of growth. The older cluster organisation among the cases analyzed, Proplast, seems to be on the right track, having progressively increased its collaboration activities over years. Aviation Valley, even if "younger" than Proplast, was set up with a strong international orientation since its beginnings, and so its activities are much more projected internationally than the other two clusters. Automobilový klaster is now an established cluster organisation, but it admitted that the first years of operation had been mainly dedicated to the consolidation of the organisation itself, more than to providing services (including internationalisation services) to its members.</p> <p>- The three cluster organisations show strong experiences at European level but comparable results are not achieved in internationalisation process. Most of the efforts are focused on promotion activities, participation to fairs and international events.</p>	<i>Cluster organisations should be supported in taking more decisive and responsible actions for initiating international cooperations in the interests of their members.</i>



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Mandate to support transnational cooperation of members	<p>- None of the cluster organisation has a formalized internationalisation strategy even if all highlight that they received an informal mandate from their members to support internationalisation processes (stipulated in the Statute or a Memorandum of understanding or the cluster strategy). The literature on clusters proved that clusters act more successfully in the international context, if they have a corresponding strategy and implement it consistently. On the basis of such an internationalisation strategy, specific measures can be implemented which can bring better results that in cases where internationalisation consists of uncoordinated individual measures.</p> <p>- Another interesting common feature is that all three projects analyzed aim at creating a database or a platform mapping enterprises and gathering information on enterprises and/or relevant technologies for the concerned sectors and covering different countries. It can be derived that the cluster organisations do feel responsible for internationalisation and external cooperation of their members, putting in place initiatives that go beyond the standard services provided by clusters to their members.</p>	<p><i>A formalized strategy for internationalisation activities and the mandate from the cluster members could be considered as pre-requisites to access support measures and targeted cluster programmes.</i></p>
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**Theoretical proposition 2:**

Firms operating in emerging industry sectors benefit from being part of clusters active in cross-regional cluster cooperation activities

Variables	Case Studies evidence	Practical conclusions for practitioners
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<p>Concrete actions of the clusters in transnational cooperation</p>	<p>- According to the experiences here reported, it seems that the benefit of the cluster organisations active in European programmes are more evident than the companies benefits, especially in terms of advancement forward internationalisation. From the case studies reported, the “spillover” mechanism from clusters internationalisation to firms internationalisation cannot be derived and cluster organisation themselves do not provide clear information on this point.</p> <p>- Considering the emerging industries issue, some interesting points can be find in the cases studies.</p> <p>* A fist peculiar aspect is the different notion of emerging industry showed by the cluster organisations. In the case of Aviation Valley, aviation is considered as an emerging industry due to the necessity of functioning on a global market, to the high technology intensity of the sector, the strong competition based on research and innovation and the high expenditure on investment needed. In the case of Proplast the specificity of an emerging industry cluster relies in its structure (strong business orientation along with a solid R&amp;D component), in the capacity of the cluster to catalyze cooperation among cluster members and outside the cluster and the need of provide high level services continuously updated.</p> <p>* A second interesting aspect is the emphasis put on the nature and intensity of interactions and cooperation among the cluster members that acquire a special importance for emerging industries. The role of clusters as initiators/facilitators of cooperation activities is considered critical for survival and success of emerging industries.</p> <p>* Last but not least, the three clusters stressed the special need of intensive cooperation between industry and science, not just internally but at international level too, in order to assure state-of-the-art technologies and innovations and be able to face international competition.</p>	<p><i>Cluster organisations should be requested to develop and implement internationalisation strategies together with their member (especially companies and SMEs), with a bottom-up approach that assure their commitment and participation and reconfirm the confidence in the process.</i></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is agreement throughout the three studies that business network and cooperation have become progressively more important in the internationalisation processes.</li> <li>Regarding the projects analyzed, all aims at promoting networking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ALPlastics project trying to support business opportunities for SMEs in terms of technology and application field.</li> <li>- CARE project pursuing closer cooperation between the aerospace sector and R&amp;D institutions at global level (since new technologies and know-how are at global and require collaboration worldwide)</li> <li>- AutoNet project supporting the creation of a permanent business network of automotive industries.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>Services offered and staff dedicated to transnational cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The three cluster organisations see themselves as a powerful instrument for sustaining transnational collaboration and internationalisation of affiliated companies and perceive the services offered for internationalisation as added value. The result of the case studies show that the services provided exceed the scope of conventional support, such as promotions trips and participation in fairs.</li> <li>- The three cluster organisations analyzed offer a wide range of support services for the internationalisation but surprisingly the financing issue has not been raised. Among other common barriers to internationalisation (especially for SMEs), financing is usually quoted as key issue hindering more determined and aggressive actions.</li> <li>- In none of the cluster organisations, there is staff dedicated to transnational cooperation and internationalisation, even if all admit that the staff usually provide this kind of support. It can also be noted that none of the clusters has a monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of the internationalisation activities. The Aviation Valley and the Automobilový klaster however try to measure and assess the impact of the internationalisation services through periodic reporting.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Cluster organisations can benefit from capitalizing instruments and tools already existing to increase the internal competences, improve the quality of services provided or train the staff.</i></p>



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	<p><i>Additional observation from the case studies</i></p>	<p><i>For research-intensive enterprises internationalisation is essential for accessing state-of-the-art technologies and innovations and face competition. The awareness on this aspect of cluster organisations operating in emerging fields should be increased in order to better match emerging industries needs.</i></p>
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## ANNEX 1

### Choice of three case studies

#### Information to fill-in Section 2 and 3

- All questions are mandatory
- Most of the questions require putting a tick in the box corresponding to the appropriate answer
- For questions requiring detailed answers, the minimum number of characters is indicated
- Delete section 1, 4 and the Annex before start to fill-in the document, save and rename it (ex. Case Study xxx\_PP8).
- Send the complete Case study to Elisa Peinetti, [clustercoop@regione.piemonte.it](mailto:clustercoop@regione.piemonte.it), by 30/04/2013.

**Only projects/initiatives that meets all the conditions listed in the 2 tables below can be considered for case studies analysis.**

#### 1. Requirements for case studies – Content related.

1	Cluster chosen for the case study must be active in one of the emerging sectors identified by activity 4.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Case study is about a Project or Initiative that originated from the intervention of cluster organisation (active role of the cluster organisation as initiator or promoter of the project/initiative)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Case study is about Project or Initiative that produced some form of transnational cooperation (as stated aim or indirect fallout).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transnational cooperation is among a cluster organisation from your own country and clusters located in different countries OR Transnational cooperation is among cluster members from your own country and member of clusters located in different countries	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 2. Requirements for case studies – Data related.

1	Availability of qualitative data about the Project or Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Availability of quantitative data about the Project or Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Possibility to interview or have direct contact with the cluster organisation object of study	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	The project or Initiative must be concluded or being in an advanced level of development to have generated some measurable impact	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3. Name of the Case study selected: ....

## Case study template

### **A. Identification of the project/initiative**

1. The project/initiative analyzed was realized through:
  - own funds of the cluster organisation, coming from:
    - Fees of cluster members
    - Revenues for services provided on the market
  - external financial contribution, from:
    - Local/Regional level
    - National level
    - European level
2. Transnational cooperation
  - was the specific aim of the project/initiative
  - resulted from activities aimed at different aims (indirect fallout)
3. Transnational cooperation is referred to
  - Research activities
  - Innovation activities
  - Networking
  - Business (new supplier, new markets exploration, please specify .....)
  - Other (specify .....)
4. Clusters involved in the transnational cooperation are from
  - Europe
    - Central Europe
    - Mediterranean Area
    - Northern Countries
    - Other (specify .....)
  - Asia (specify ...)
  - North America (specify ...)
  - South America (specify ...)
6. Time scale of the project/initiative
  - starting date: .....
  - end date: .....
  - or  ongoing

### **B. Detailed description of the project or initiative**

*(at least 2000 characters)*

### **C. Description of the cluster**

43. Which is the name of the cluster?

44. In which country is the cluster organisation located?

45. In which technological/industrial area is the cluster mainly active?

Please choose among:

Aerospace Agro-Food Automotive Biotechnology Business & Financial Services  
 Chemical Construction (incl. equipment) Creative Electronics, Electrical  
 Equipment Energy Environment/Green Technologies Footwear and Leather  
 Health Care/Medical Devices ICT Jewellery Logistics Maritime Materials and new  
 Materials Mechatronics Media Metal Processing/Manufacturing Micro- and  
 Nanotechnology Mining (incl. equipment) Optics and Photonics Packaging  
 Plastics Printing Production Technology Railway Security Software  
 Telecommunications Textile Tourism Transport Infrastructure Wood, Paper,  
 Furniture

Or specify...

46. Total cluster members:

47. Number of firms cluster members:

48. Number of SMEs cluster members:

49. Year of establishment of the cluster:

50. Please paste here the LOGO of the cluster:

51. According to the classification of the different ways of channelling RDI funding through clusters - elaborated in the TACTICS project<sup>2</sup> - please tick the level of involvement of the clusters in your country/region:

- Meta-level
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4
- Level 5
- Mixed, specify.....

<sup>2</sup> Extract from "Channelling RDI funding through excellent clusters" A report paper summarizing Tactics/ECA main views, examples, workshops, targeting policy makers and other cluster stakeholders. Pages 16-18. Downloadable at:

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52. Please list the services provided to the cluster members:

- 1 -
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 -
- 5 - ....

53. Please tick the services provided to the cluster members for the internationalisation:

- Support in developing the internationalisation strategies
- Support in developing a marketing&branding strategies
- Providing information about relevant markets and local trends
- Providing additional information (legislation, tax rules, local funding opportunities, local experts, inter-cultural behaviour, typical pitfalls, etc.)
- Identifying appropriate partners
- Organising access to relevant key actors / initiating first business contacts in foreign countries
- Advertising / selling the products of the SMEs
- Organising business missions
- Representing the companies at trade fairs
- Raising of funds to reduce the investments of the firms for internationalisation
- Other (specify...).

54. According to the cluster analyzed, which are the specificities of a cluster organisation operating in an emerging industry sector?

*(at least 1000 characters)*

55. Description of the experiences of the cluster in transnational cooperation.

*(at least 2000 characters)*

56. According to the cluster organisation, how companies perceive transnational cooperation?

(Important, relatively important, not enough skills to pursue it, etc. Please provide explanation.)

57. Please list and describe all the concrete actions undertaken by the cluster to facilitate transnational cooperation for their cluster members

- 1 -
- 2 -
- 3 -
- 4 -
- 5 - ....

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58. Is there a strategy for transnational cooperation or internationalisation being developed and implemented by the cluster organisation?

- No
- Yes, please describe it...

59. Does the cluster organisation have a mandate or agreed task to support its members in facilitating transnational/international cooperation (stated in the association contract signed by members, stated in the statute/charter of the cluster organisation, etc.)?

- No
- Yes, please describe where and how it is formalized...

60. Does the cluster have specifically designated staff appointed to support transnational cooperation and internationalisation? How many?

- No
- Yes, please indicate how many ...

61. Does the cluster have any monitoring system in place to measure progress and impact of your internationalisation activities?

- No
- Yes, please briefly describe it...

62. How do the cluster organisation measure/assess the impact of internationalisation services or transnational activities offered to cluster members?

- No measurement/assessment
- Yes
  - Number of contacts established
  - Number of foreign experts / talents attracted
  - Number of cooperation agreements
  - Number of financial cooperation
  - Number of new R&D&I projects
  - Number of new projects initiated (non R&D&I)
  - Access to new technologies, products, services or processes
  - Increased turnover of SMEs generated in target markets
  - Others, please specify...

63. Has the cluster been subject to external assessment, benchmark exercise, evaluation, label process? (Please describe)

***D. Detailed description of the impact of the project/initiative on the cluster organisation and on the cluster members, including quantitative and qualitative data and how they were measured (interviews, questionnaire, data from balance sheet, etc. )***

*(at least 2000 characters)*



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**E. Detailed description of the reasons that motivated the choice of the project/initiative as case study.**

(at least 2000 characters)

**F. List and description of sources of data and collection methods (interviews, statistical surveys, etc.)**

Part A:

Part B:

Part C:

Part D:

Part E: