



# CLUSTERS CORD

connecting small to feel big

## NEWSLETTER no. 1



**CENTRAL  
EUROPE**  
COOPERATING FOR SUCCESS.



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Since the publication of Michael Porter’s book, “The Competitive Advantage of Nations” (Macmillan, London, 1990), clusters have grasped the imagination of both policy makers and entrepreneurs. In a globalizing world where small and medium-sized companies increasingly have to compete internationally, clusters play an important role in supporting company competitiveness by increasing productivity, innovation and firm formation.

Governments in central, eastern and south east Europe have realized that in order to achieve sustainable economic growth and to foster regionally balanced economic development, it is crucial to encourage entrepreneurial spirit at the local level. Clusters, demanding interaction among entrepreneurs and local institutions, co-operation of both local and national levels of government, as well as co-ordination among various policy areas have the potential to dynamise their local economies.



## Concept of the project

Clusters CORD is an interregional project, which aims for the improvement of the regional capacity in the management and development of clusters. To be a sustainable aim this means an exchange of experience, good practices and a development of direct cooperation among the existing actors. The regions, where clusters are a relatively new instrument, can learn from the experienced partners in this field.

Clusters from the same thematic fields but different geographical origin get together through the creation of three so-called „meta-clusters“. Ten key industries have been already pre-identified:

- |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Mobility & Logistics             |  Energy & Environment    |
|  Professional Services            |  Production Technologies |
|  ICT                              |  Wood Industries         |
|  Automotive & Aeronautics Tourism |  Food Processing         |
|  Health Sciences                  |                                                                                                             |

The project foresees to start with the benchmarking activities of regional clusters and regional cluster policies of participating actors that will lead to identification of the best practices. The outcomes of this activity will be summed up in the benchmarking study. In order to reach the main goal – to establish 3 meta-clusters and to support the cooperation between clusters – the project will bring together clusters managers, cluster representatives, as well as relevant decision makers exchanging about the creation of new services and methods as well as potential synergies. In workshops and conferences in the different partner regions stakeholders, experts and companies from fully grown or developing clusters can discuss, exchange views and learn from each other. This should help to bring the member states and Europe more together. As a result of cooperation agreements between the clusters should be signed, guaranteeing future joint activities and their institutionalization.

## Project partners of the project are:

-  Lead Partner – Regional Development Agency of Usti Region, PLC (Czech Republic)
-  Stuttgart Region Economic Development Corporation (WRS) – (Germany)
-  Regional Development agency of Piestany (Slovakia)
-  Regional Development Agency Celje I.t.d. (Slovenia)
-  Regional Development Agency Bielsko-Biala (Poland)
-  Upper Austrian Chamber of Commerce (Austria)
-  Milano Metropoli Development Agency (Italy)
-  Mid-Pannon Regional Development Company (Hungary)
-  “ARLEG” S.A. Regional Development Agency (Poland)
-  Centre for research, innovation and regional development (Czech Republic)

## CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

CENTRAL EUROPE is a European Union programme that encourages cooperation among the countries of Central Europe to improve innovation, accessibility and the environment and to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of their cities and regions.

CENTRAL EUROPE invests €231 million to provide funding to transnational cooperation projects involving public and private organizations from Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The programme is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and runs from 2007 to 2013. Interested partnerships are invited to propose their projects following public calls for proposals, which will be widely publicized.

Facilitation of innovation across Central Europe is one of the key priorities of the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme. Supporting the establishment and development of transnational clusters in key competence areas is being considered as relevant for enhancing the framework conditions for innovation and support for transnational cooperation between cluster organizations and cluster initiatives is a vital element of the European Commission's broad-based innovation strategy.

More information can be found on <http://www.central2013.eu/index.php>



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FUND

## INTRODUCTION OF PARTNERS

### Lead Partner and WP1 leader

The Regional Development Agency  
of the Usti-Region PLC

The Regional Development Agency of the Usti-Region PLC is an organization for support and coordination of economic and social development of this territory. It is designed on the same basis as development agencies successfully operating in EU member states. The goals, structure and a range of activities of the Agency are tailored to the regional conditions and environment. The Agency has been listed in the Phare/Tacis Central Consultancy Register of the European Commission under the registration number CZE - 20597 since 1995. It is the host organization of the regional Euro Info Centre (EIC), which is a part of the European Commission's international network of EIC's. The Agency is a member of the European



Association of Regional Agencies (EURADA) and the Czech Association of Regional Development Agencies (CARA). It represents CZECHINVEST, the national inward investment promotion agency and the Association of Innovative Entrepreneurship of the Czech Republic in Usti-Region. The Agency established the Regional Information Centre in 1995, it coordinates the Regional Centre for Tourism and a group of land-use planning experts in the Regional Spatial-Planning Centre.

The top priority of the Agency is the support and coordination of activities contributing to a systematic development of the Usti-Region. It cooperates with public administration, local authorities, Euroregions and EU institutions. There is a favorable cooperation with enterprises, non-governmental organizations and of course with many foreign institutions.

### History and Organizational Structure

The Agency was established as a Public Limited Corporation by organizations from the region's public and business sector in 1994. After establishment of the Ústí Region (2001) the ownership structure of the Agency was adapted to a participation of the Region (majority shareholder at present time), municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Agriculture, Trade Unions and a university.

The main statutory body of the Agency is a five member Board of Directors composed of representatives of shareholders. A six member Supervisory Board acts as the controlling body. The executive team has twenty-three full time experts and a pool of external experts of various professions.

## Mission and Goals

-  Provide information services to organizations and institutions in the public and private sectors
-  Provide quality expert services in regional problem solution and implementation of the development strategy
-  Mobilize main actors of the Usti-Region and their financial, material and human resources to be used for regional development
-  Maximize effects of the region's strengths and exploit them commercially for further development of the Usti-Region

## Services Provided

-  Information from the Regional Information Centre (demographic data, environmental matters, tourism, transport, business environment, land and property, infrastructure, resources, etc.)
-  Economic and social research, feasibility studies and development plans for the public and private sectors
-  Development, co-ordination and implementation of development projects (e.g. supported by European Union's Programmes)
-  Business consulting, system approach to programmes and projects, co-ordination of activities in compliance with regional strategy
-  Complex services for investors (searching for suitable land and property for business activities, administrative work, translations, interpreting and other specialized services upon request)
-  Support for small and medium sized enterprises

## PP10 and WP2 leader

Centre for research, innovation  
and regional development



The aim of Centre for Research, Innovation and Regional Development (CVVI) is to become one of the top research places focusing on innovation and connecting primary research and existing practice. Through regional activities, it aims to act as important subject that spreads innovation technologies across the region where it operates. It also tries to develop knowledge and skills in the region as well as engage the science and research in everyday life of its citizens.



CVVI is interested in the key areas of its members and partner organizations. These are renewable resources, decreasing energetic demand factor, machine industry, transport, safety of sport technologies or biotechnologies and regional development. The Centre has seven institutes that focus on various sectors of industry:

- Institute of Energy and Ecoenergy
- Institute of Transport
- Institute of Innovation in Industry and Construction
- Institute of Innovation in Forestry and Agriculture
- Institute of Health Protection and Security
- Institute of Sport Technology and Institute of Certification



Supporting activities for regional SME's strengthening the competitiveness and innovation capacities of CVVI's region is one the most important activity realized by CVVI in general. Its experience covers the facilitation of clusters creation through the development of cluster services at regional level as well as the creation of trans-regional bilateral or network cooperation between clusters supported by CVVI. The best example is Energoklastr, where

CVVI acts as facilitator of its creation and supports promotion of new services provided by cluster members. Furthermore, the Centre supports other projects like Science-Technical Park Milovice or Centre of Technology Transfer Vysocina.

At the moment, the Centre is actively participating in EC funded projects in the field related to cluster development or network facilitation – C-Plus and Clusters-Cord. CVVI would like to use unique position to support intensive cross-facilitation between these projects and build synergies. Beside this, two other EU funded projects. IntraMed project supports technology transfer and increase of innovation potential of clinical workplaces in biomedicine field. Project InoPlace aims at improving of key supporting services for young innovators across central Europe.

Furthermore, the Centre's objective is to connect the world of university research to the top-ranking companies in given fields of industry. This imaginary bridge enables the application of the research in practice. The long-term cooperation of academic and commercial sphere makes the research more efficient and helps to find solutions of common issues. Lately, the national media informed about the competition Technology Cup held by CVVI to support and motivate the young in research and innovation process.



## IMPORTANT EVENTS

### Joint to Launch Székesfehérvár, Hungary

**30th November - 1st December 2010**

The event was organized by Hungarian project partner – Mid-Pannon Regional Development Company

## VARIOUS ACTORS PARTICIPATED IN THE MEETING



The project team



The project observers



Representatives of C-Plus project, CNCB project and Autonet



Representatives of national organizations supporting clusters development (Hungarian Pole Office, CTD, RDA)



Representatives of Clusters Observatory (Mr. Andreas Geiblinger)



Representatives of European Commission



Regional policy decision makers



Cluster management organizations, Cluster members (PharmAgora Cluster, Network Security Monitoring Cluster, The European Cluster Collaboration Platform)



R&D organizations



External experts (Hungarian Academy of Science)



## Panel discussion

In the course of the event, information on clusters in different regions of the partners' countries was disseminated in a series of short presentations. After that, five parallel panel discussions were held dealing with the industries of ICT, Tourism, Food, Environment and Health. This way, representatives of clusters in these industries had the opportunity to discuss the best practices and compare the issues they have to face. In the end, they evaluated the prospects for cooperation.

## Project presentation

On the second day, Lead Partner (Regional Development Agency of Ústí Region), Ms Petra Mašková introduced the process of clustarization in the Czech Republic. Presentations of other projects (C-Plus, The CNCB project, Autonet) and institutions followed.

## Metacluster creation

The event proved to be a good platform for cross-fertilization, exchange of experience and obtaining contacts. Overall, it can be seen as a next step to sectorial meta-cluster creation, which is the ultimate goal of the project.

## NEWS FROM PARTNERS

### PP2 - Stuttgart Region Economic Development Corporation (WRS)

On 10th November 2010 the official start of the Baden-Wuerttemberg Network for Logistics „LogBW“ was given by Ernst Pfister, minister of economic affairs in Baden-Wuerttemberg. In the next 3 years „LogBW“ is funded with 500,000 Euros to build up a network which is prior consisting of SMEs and R&D institutions.



Mission of the network is, of course, to generate ideas, create innovations and set impulse for growth. Furthermore it shall bundle the competences Baden-Wuerttemberg has, visualize them and strengthen the national and international position of world class leader in logistic technology. The cluster organization, KLOK Logistics Competence Center, is in charge of the network activities. One of the major steps is the internationalization strategy. Therefore LogBW is looking for partners and logistic clusters in Europe to cooperate.

### PP7 - Upper Austrian Chamber of Commerce

According to the main goal of the project Clusters Cord to create awareness about transnational activities of clusters, about cluster policies, development and best practice cases as well as meta-cluster creation, the Upper Austrian Food Cluster and Stuttgart Region Economic Development Corporation informed on February 18th 2011 about the project at the BioFach – the world biggest international fair for organic food in Nuremberg. Further, companies from Upper Austria and Stuttgart were asked about their experiences in creating transnational cooperation. It was revealed that young and smaller companies need individual support in the very beginning of their activities to be able to start transnational cooperation. Bigger companies are interested in transnational cooperation, they use the information provided by clusters and networks to deepen existing relations and foster further cooperation. For all companies, it is very important that they can gain a practical use of clusters and networks and that not everything is treated too abstract.

