



CLUSTERS CORD

connecting small to feel big

NEWSLETTER no. 3



**CENTRAL
EUROPE**
COOPERATING FOR SUCCESS.



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND

BENCHMARKING CONFERENCE REPORT

The Milan Benchmarking conference was hosted by Milano Metropoli Development Agency. There have been 113 participants from different sectors and fields of operation.

Main interest was given to five chosen sectors and its representatives. Those sectors are energy&environment, tourism, health, food and ICT. These industrial sectors were represented by more than thirty representatives of cluster managers. In over eight hours of interactive discussion the participants could learn best practices and see concrete examples from central European regions, share experience and plan together future joint actions on regional SMEs collaboration and meta-clustering.



The conference was organized in three sessions. While the first two sessions envisaged presentations and roundtable discussion, the third session was based on an interactive workshop.

The first session described the experience and challenges of five cluster managers from five different countries. Those speakers from each from different chosen industrial sector highlighted their experience from cluster management in their regions and answered the question from the crowd.

The second session focused on the cluster opportunities in an international context. A roundtable involved a regional policy maker and three experts in clusters and transnational collaboration.

The third session workshop was launched with a brief description of the importance of applying participatory methods and techniques to harness the collective intelligence of the participants. During this final session the participants worked in five separate meta-clusters working groups to identify possible areas of collaboration and joint transnational services across the clusters. The clusters from different sectors shared their expectation of demand and offer side for future cooperation.

Based on the results mainly of the third session will continue other project activities heading to establishment the meta-clusters at least in three different industrial sectors.



WHAT IS METACLUSTER?

If clusters represent a strategic resource, nowadays we cannot avoid considering their need of change and innovation in order to face competitive challenges. The Clusters-Cord project innovative approach promotes an evolution of clusters to **META-CLUSTER**.

A meta-cluster is a group of similar organizations, especially clusters gathered together and sharing their knowledge to improve the results in their particular sector. It is a form of transnational clusters cooperation based on the cooperation of clusters from the same industries from different CE regions. Meta Cluster can be also described as a strategic Network, striving towards combining individual aims to support different clusters.



Creation of meta-cluster can bring lot of benefits to members of each cluster and most of all it is the first step in internationalization activities. Meta-cluster will provide environment for concentration of resources and means in order to accelerate the transfer of knowledge and know-how.

All members of the meta-cluster will be able to share the access to research and testing facilities, and to develop new and better services for cluster members and by this strengthen the ability of the industry to create innovation and create the comparative advantage for the members of the meta-cluster.

Potential common activities of the Meta-Cluster

Information and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed database • Supplier and service catalogue • Events, company tours, study visits • Press book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet / homepage Newsletters Monthly mailing
Internationalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to international events, congresses, • Support of international co-operation • Attract foreign visits in the cluster 	
Marketing and PR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and marketing materials • National and international PR and advertising activities • Measures to strengthen the branch image • Trade fairs, company visits, • Lobbying 	
Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation and support of co-operation projects • Establishment of contacts between potential project partners • Co-operation with R&D, educational institutions • Facilitate higher innovativeness 	
Training and Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of branch related educational requirements • Activities for qualification of company staff • Workshops and seminars • Inter-company learning • Co-operation with R&D and educational bodies 	

INTRODUCTION OF PARTNERS

WP4 leader

Milano Metropoli Development Agency



Milano Metropoli is the Agency for the Promotion and Sustainable Development of the Metropolitan Area of Milan. It is a public joint-stock company created by the Province of Milan and the Milan Chamber of Commerce to promoting economic and social development in greater Milan, one of the most dynamic metropolitan areas in Europe.

The Agency works closely with the public authorities operating in the metropolitan area of Milan and in partnership with local town councils, development agencies, universities and research centers, trade unions, the business community, banks, foundations and no-profit organizations.



Agency has become specialized in brownfield conversion and re-industrialization projects and in setting up new areas of industrial excellence (meta-districts) for artisans and SMEs. Milano Metropoli works by setting up facilities and services - often in collaboration with La Fucina Business Innovation Centre - that can reinforce business and technological cooperation between enterprises and between areas, support research and

innovation and intensify international relations. More information about BIC is on <http://www.biconline.it/>.



Projects business networks

In addition to the project Clusters-Cord the Agency is currently working in the construction of a cluster of businesses in the agricultural sector in Milan and enhancement of the Marine chain of Lombard cluster shipping (100 companies) in which the Agency supports activities of internationalization, promotion and marketing, networking between the territories.



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PP3

Regional Development Agency of Piešťany (PN RRA)

- Regional Development agency of Piešťany is an interest group of legal entities. It was founded in 2008. The founders of the agency were Trnava Self-Governing Region, Town Piešťany and Trnavská rozvojová spoločnosť, Lc. In 2011 was adopted for a further full member Progresit, Civic Association.
- It is part of Integrated Network of Regional Development Agencies of Trnava Self-Governing Region.
- Our agency cooperate with participants from self-governing and non-profit sector on local and regional level. We promote the region and activities, mainly in:
 - Orientation on the development of the region in accordance with the Programme of economic and social development of Trnava Self-Governing Region, as well as other documents.
 - Realisation of activities defined at the level of Trnava Self-governing region oriented to activities related to the development of the region
 - Stimulating the region in the sphere of gaining domestic and foreign grants by developing international and interregional cooperation.
 - Supporting admission of foreign investments into the regions and initiating of help building of business incubators, centres and industrial parks.
 - Supporting the relationship to the public in the region by organizing seminars, workshops, exhibitions, presentations of regional projects and initiatives.
 - Promoting preservation and wealth of the cultural heritage of our regions, and supporting cultural life based on local traditions and dialects.



Current activities:

- Partnership in projects – Clusters-Cord, CITTA DEI MOTORI
- Cooperation with municipalities in the framework Covenant of Mayors – CoM
- Cooperation with mikroregions Trnava self-governing region
- Consulting activity for the Operational programmes of the National strategic reference framework

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IMPORTANT EVENTS

In the following months the main topic of activities of the project Clusters-Cord will be organization of **three Exchange forums** dedicated to different industrial sectors chosen based on the results of Benchmarking analysis done in during the previous periods of project implementation.

The **first Exchange forum** will take place on **21st and 22nd February 2012 in Linz**. This Exchange forum is aimed on meeting of working group Energy&Environment. The second exchange forum is planned for beginning of April 2012 in Milan, involving cluster managers from the Food sector and Tourism. The last Exchange forum will take place in Stuttgart in June 2012 and there will be meeting of cluster managers from working groups ICT and Health.

Other clusters are welcome to participate in working groups and to benefit from such a valuable international collaboration with industry-related clusters in the exchange forums. Currently there are about 30 clusters involved in the project from the Central Europe area. In partnership managed to involve around 30 clusters from Central Europe.

More information on www.clusterscord.eu

NEWS FROM PARTNERS

PP5 - The Mid-Pannon Regional Development Company

- ➊ The **Central-Transdanubian Mid-term Observer** meeting was held in autumn 2011 focuses on the evaluation of the project, the participants shared their views on the overall Benchmarking Study and explored the basic features, real needs and interests in the field of meta-cluster development in Central-Transdanubian context.
- ➋ The opening conference of the **project “Development of the Vertes-Duna Cluster”** was one of the most effective events in the field of innovation-oriented network-based economy development in Central-Transdanubian Region in November. The Mid-Pannon Co. is very proud of the successful reception of the introduction of project Clusters-Cord at the conference.



PP7 – Upper Austrian Chamber of Commerce / Lebensmittel-Cluster

- **OÖ. Exporttag 2011** was an economic congress held in Linz on Monday 14th of November 2011. A lot of different industrial sectors linked to Clusters-Cord main topics (e.g. Food, Health, Mobility, as well as Logistics) were represented at that congress where Upper Austrian Chamber of Commerce promoted the Clusters-Cord project.

PP8 – Milano Metropoli Development Agency

- **Innovation Festival finale: WHAT IF... We discuss the future like Creative Industries?**
Milan, 26 - 28 February 2012 .

Province of Milan organized, with the EU-DG Enterprise, a big conference as final event of Innovation Festival project but also as launching event of the new initiative of DG Enterprise ECIA, the European Creative Industries Alliance. Innovation Festival is an INNO Action under the PRO INNO Europe Initiative® aimed at celebrating innovation across six European cities.



More information on:

<http://www.proinno-europe.eu/innovationfestivalevent/content/innovation-festival-finale>

PP9 – Regional development agency ARLEG

On 30th November 2011, RDA ARLEG and the representatives of clusters involved in the process of creating a Meta-Cluster in Cluster-Cord project i.e. SIDE CLUSTER, NUTRIBIOMED, ICT Cluster and took part in the conference "**Polish clusters and cluster policy**". The conference was an opportunity to discuss the management of cooperative links, knowledge of foreign experience and presentation of cluster coordinators from the region.

PP10 – Centre for research, innovation and regional development

CVVI in cooperation with other partners launched next year of competition "**Technology cup**" for students with innovation ideas. More details can be found on <http://www.technologycup.cz/>.