INTRODUCTION

We wish you pleasant reading of the 5th e-newsletter ClusterPoliSEE. More information about the ClusterPoliSEE project is available on the website: www.clusterpolisee.eu.

Join ClusterPoliSEE S3 platform

ClusterPoliSEE S3 learning platform is a collaborative and policy learning system across all project countries to transform SEE into a broad-reaching laboratory for regional policy innovation including the institutional, organizational, design and implementation aspects, and to develop a competence centre in SEE for Cluster stakeholders to spearhead and test the advantages of the smart specialization model as a guideline for R&D and competitiveness policies.
SEE Cluster Policy learning platform aims at improving SEE cluster policies through cooperative learning, policy transfer and information interchange between SEE policy makers exploring the added value of transnational cooperation based on an open and interactive web-based support for mutual learning and through a shared knowledge base and common tools.
Any institution representative, R&D Transfer and innovation promotion body, cluster network or more simply, a stakeholder interested in Smart Specialization themes, cluster policy, development and networking in the South East Europe area, you can freely join ClusterPoliSEE S3 platform.

ClusterPoliSEE S3 platform is available at the address: http://www.clusterpolisees3.eu

Working Group Innovation and R&D Driven Cluster Development

The principal objective of WG is the definition of conditions to set up an effective R&D and innovation policy for clusters to be shared within the learning platform.
The activities undertaken have been directed to analyse, starting from cases of existing clusters, discuss and elaborate implemented policies in order to identify the more relevant aspects to be considered when designing a policy for R&D and innovation for clusters.
The Emilia-Romagna Region, as WG leader, has developed a strategic analysis of the Biomedical District of Mirandola, one of the major success cases at regional level, starting from a SWOT analysis of the cluster and arriving to suggest some recommendations. Focus on two examples of Cluster Initiatives within the region has been analysed: the Scientific and Technologic Park, innovative materials and applied research of the Mirandolese and the Biomedical and Prosthetics District.
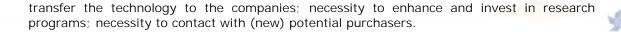The objective of these focuses has been to understand the needs of enterprises belonging to these clusters in order to plan and implement projects and actions, also in terms of future funding, for the structural strengthening and improvement of cluster competitiveness.
2 kinds of recommendations have been identified:
- "transversal recommendations" aimed at enhancing the sector/industry as a whole: lack of education and training programs; seek for partnerships with banks and financial entities; more collaboration among regional Research centres and universities and firms; try to attract new companies to the district;
- "strategy related recommendations" specifically addressed to the needs of the companies: support to the internationalization of companies; continuously invest in terms of R&D and

transfer the technology to the companies; necessity to enhance and invest in research programs; necessity to contact with (new) potential purchasers.

Working Group Employment and new jobs creation

Working Group Employment and new jobs creation means to set the cluster policy framework for improving the number and quality of jobs created in clusters.

Acting in a reflective and advisory manner for the whole ClusterPoliSEE partnership, the WG6 members (Pannon Business Network Association, Maribor Development Agency – and North-East RDA Romania as coordinator) reached its objective by developing a new policy learning mechanism capable to serve as reference on the project web platform.

Here are some of WG conclusions:

- One of the most important areas of improvement of the cluster economic performance is the capacity of the education & training system to get in contact with cluster organizations and cooperate;
- The existence of a national cluster accreditation system proves to be an appropriate tool to connect cluster development strategies with priorities of the Regional Development Plans;
- The inter-cluster knowledge exchange is best supported when effective communication with all involved partners is developed and regularly supported;
- Coaching initiatives and creation of cluster networks are solutions for improving the quality of the clusters members' and its management.
- The entrepreneurship-related activities at the clusters level could be accompanied by enforced intermediaries that deliver highly specialized advisory services capable to support creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

These goals could be achieved with better use of EU funds, targeted to promote the employment and improvement of professional skills, and increased cooperation between Danube Region countries in strengthening their cluster systems.
For more information follow us on http://www.clusterpolisees3.eu

Results of pilot actions

Productive Clusters - the backbone of the smart specialization process of North-East Region economics.

Clusters are the perfect mechanism through innovative ideas can be promoted in the industry and the environment in which the instruments that can boost competitiveness, innovation and regional development can be successfully applied. In these sectors, the entrepreneurial discovery process can be animated and can be encouraged to create new intersectoral relations and outsourcing of knowledge.

Although the poorest region of Romania, in the North-East Region have been activated in the past 3 years, 8 cluster associative structures, as a new effort to capitalize on regional resources, promoting development initiatives in areas of activity recognized as with potential for growth and competitiveness.

Regional clusters profile analysis conducted by North-East RDA in 2013 indicated that the possible areas with smart specialization potential are food, textile, health and ICT. On this occasion, have been identified the most important common issues of regional clusters: the need to entire the value chain with new members, on the one hand, and the need to become more interactive with each other, on the other hand, so as to exploit and benefit together for certain products and services that they can provide each other.

Pilot action focused on value chain analysis of the North-East ASTRICO productive cluster, which included facilitating organizing bilateral meetings - business-to-business (B2B) at sectoral level and organizing an intersectoral cluster-to-cluster event to encourage new activities with mutual benefits for all members of the cluster, attracting new members and generating hybrid activities useful for their specialization.

Due to implementation constraints of this pilot initiative (timeframe for implementation was January to June 2014 and limited budget of ClusterPoliSEE project for this activity), 3 other regional clusters (IMAGO-MOL, BioRONE and ICONIC New Media) who were interested to participate at this activity, took part only in development and follow-up activities.

This was the first initiative of this kind in North-East Region Romania. By implementing this pilot actions have been achieved the following specific objectives:
• Get a clear image of the missing links in the value chain of a productive regional cluster, which prevents it from excelling in existing markets or enter new markets (more specialized);
• Defining and disseminating to a pool of potential partners who can provide to this productive cluster the necessary input for closing these value chains;
• Provide technical assistance for regional increasing regional clusters performance through innovation and cooperation.

Pilot action was monitored by North-East RDA, together with management representatives of reviewed clusters and assessed by external consultants contracted by Marche Region Italy, ClusterPoliSEE project coordinator.

Events

❖ Smart cooperation in coastal and maritime tourism - Encouraging transnational partnerships through clusters and networks, 20 January 2015, Belgium, Brussels HERE

❖ New Narratives for Innovation, 26-27 February 2015, Brussels http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/events/2015/02/26_narratives_innovation_en.htm

❖ "Co-Summit 2015 Smart Industry: Impact of Software Innovation", 10-11 March 2015, Berlin, Germany http://www.artemis-ia.eu/co-summit-2015/index.html

Latest News

Visegrad Group clusters set their sights on Southeast Asia
Visegrad Group clusters set their sights on Southeast Asia On 4 and 5 November 2014 Ostrava hosted the final conference held as part of the V4Clusters project. The aim of this project is to strengthen cluster-based cooperation within the Visegrad Group of Central European countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia - also known as the V4) and to create sector-specific groups of clusters operating in four key industries which rank among the V4's key strengths: mechanical engineering, the automotive sector, furniture manufacturing, and telecommunications. Full announcement here: http://clusterpolisee.eu/hu/news-detail/Visegrad+Group+clusters+set+their+sights+on+Southeast+Asia_217

"Cross-Linking Clusters for Innovation"
On 22 October 2014, around 100 cluster-related stakeholders (representatives of business networks, policy makers, regional development agencies) met in Vienna to discuss on various European approaches of cluster policy using clusters as a supporting instrument for cross-sectorial cooperation.
Please find more information including presentations and pictures of the conference here: http://www.clusterix.info/

"Six policy factsheets for effective cluster support policies in SE Europe".
Corallia has summarized the findings of the six new policy learning mechanisms in six policy factsheets. Full announcement here: http://www.corallia.org/en/news/news/2281-corallia-clusters-en.html

"Corallia participates in the new European Cluster strategy for Growth".
Corallia was invited at the European Cluster Conference 2014 addressing the role of clusters in support of SME growth, industrial renewal and regional structural change and competitiveness. Full press release here: http://www.corallia.org/en/news/events/2279-european-cluster-conference-en.html

"Corallia became a full member of the EBN", http://www.corallia.org/en/news/press-releases/2226-corallia-became-a-full-member-of-the-ebn.html

"The Greek ICT ecosystem meets the ITU" http://www.corallia.org/en/news/press-releases/2385-greek-government-and-itu-meets-the-greek-innovation-ecosystem.html

Editorial Information