CLUSTRAT

Boosting innovation through new cluster concepts in support of emerging issues and cross-sectoral themes

Report on the

1st Transnational Policy Dialogue

Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum

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Executive Summary

CluStrat aims at maintaining and improving the competitiveness of clusters in the CENTRAL EUROPE cooperation area, by developing new strategic policy approaches on how to render clusters even more capable to face and live up to the challenges posed by new markets. A strategy on new cluster concepts in support of emerging economic sectors, cross-technologies and cross-sectoral themes will be developed and tested.

CluStrat is the only project called for and approved in the recent strategic call for project proposals in the INTERREG IVB CENTRAL EUROPE programme under the funding priority Innovation. 18 partners and 7 associated institutions from Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Ukraine will work together for three years, from October 2011.

Due to the strategic nature of CluStrat, all project steps and activities are to result from interaction with policy makers on regional, national and transnational level. The main instrument of the CluStrat project is therefore the policy dialogue, where project partners have the opportunity to discuss with policy makers and develop in a joint effort the strategy for new cluster concepts for Central Europe. During the 3-year period of the CluStrat project there will be four transnational policy dialogues. The first determined the start of the project activities and is of high importance, as the basic topics within the strategy development were defined.

In the First Transnational Policy Dialogue which took place on 15 December 2011 the project partners reached a consensus on the following three Emerging Industries and a majority decision on the three crosscutting issues as basic topics for future project activities.

Emerging Industries

1. active aging
2. sustainable development / green economy
3. sustainable mobility

Crosscutting issues

1. gender and innovation including diversity aspects
2. internationalisation
3. knowledge / technology transfer

Introduction

The First Transnational Policy Dialogue (TPD) took place on 15th December 2011 in Stuttgart. About 50 representatives of the different regions of Central Europe took place in this 1st discussion round. The objective of the First Transnational Policy Dialogue was to identify the topics which will be further explored in the mapping process of work package 4. As basic element for the discussion the Lead partner (Dr. Petra Püchner) prepared discussion papers on: Emerging Industries, Crosscutting Isssues and Innovation & Gender. These papers were discussed in a LinkedIn discussion group beforehand and an updated version of the working papers were presented in the TPD. During the first TPD every region had the opportunity to provide their opinion on the subjects. The first TPD was split in two sessions: The first session was on Emerging Industries while the second session was on Crosscutting Issues.

This report provides an overview on the discussions which took place on the First Transnational Policy Dialogue.[1]

1st Session: Emerging Industries

The objective of this session was that all project partners find a consensus on three Emerging Industries which will be further investigated in the mapping process and will built the basic element for future project activities. Following three emerging industries were proposed in the working paper:

1. Active aging (as a response to the challenge health, demographic change and well-being)
2. Sustainable development / green economy (as a response to the challenge climate action, resource efficiency, raw materials)
3. Sustainable mobility (as a response to the challenge smart, green and integrated transport)

For this session three experts were invited to provide their input and to assist the project partners in their decisions:

Werner Pamminger, Managing Director of Clusterland Upper Austria, Member of the European Cluster Observatory and responsible for the Cluster Collaboration Platform. The

[1] A more detailed summary is laid down in the minutes, which are for internal / project partner level only.

content of both platforms give some ideas for the cluster mapping process, show already available information and thus are important for the following steps of CluStrat in the cluster mapping exercise.

Michel Catinat of the European Commission, DG Enterprise & Industry, member of the High Level Group on Key Enabling Technologies. The results of the survey on Key Enabling Technologies and their importance in regard to all industry sectors were presented. They are thus cross-cutting technologies, which should find their way into the more traditional industry clusters. They will also have their special role to deploy the emerging industries and are thus in the core of CluStrat.

Prof Jan Larosse, Policy Advisor at the Department of Economy, Science and Innovation of the Flemish Government. He could present not only the idea of smart specialization, but also showed practical examples from the region of Flanders, including also graphs and pictures to visualize cluster mapping exercises supporting smart specialization. CluStrat will develop a strategy for the CE region, a macro-region. To avoid duplication of policy efforts and investments, smart specialization is a key issue, which should drive the strategy process. It is thus important to understand the dimension of smart specialization.

All three experts underlined the importance of CluStrat. The timing is perfect, as regions and policy makers on national and EU level are discussing exactly the issues, how to support a better deployment of key enabling and cross-cutting technologies. Clusters play a key role in that and especially the experts from Brussels expressed their interest to keep contact with the project implementation.

Feedback round on proposed emerging industries

Every region had the opportunity to present their opinion on the working paper. Overall the project partners agreed, that the three proposed industry sectors are well chosen, as they are

a) Broad enough so that each region can find appropriate industry sectors
b) And at the same time allow regions to show their specific strength and thus give the chance to have different priorities according to the various industrial architectures in each region in CE.

Aerospace – so far not mentioned in the working paper – was asked to be added by some partners.

It became clear, that some regions are very specialized in one or two sectors, others can rely on a large variety of sectors and industries.

A consensus was reached to go for the three Emerging Industries which were initially proposed by the lead partner.

2nd Session: Crosscutting Issues

The objective of this session was to identify three crosscutting issues which will constitute the basis for future project activities, too. At the beginning of session 2 Dr Püchner gave an introduction on Gender & Innovation, a mandatory topic for the CluStrat project. She emphasized that Gender is not a problem but offers a lot of opportunities for research and business and that there are already case studies for gender and clusters. A working paper on this topic is available.

Furthermore she explained that crosscutting issues are non-technological issues and should therefore be clearly distinguished from the technological issues like cross-cutting technologies. Those are being dealt within the emerging industries.

Following cross-cutting issues had been mentioned during the online discussions (linkedin and email) and were on the table:

1. gender and innovation including diversity aspects (mandatory issue)
2. sustainability
3. internationalisation
4. knowledge and technology transfer
5. new business models

As the gender-topic is mandatory and three topics in total were to be elaborated on, another two topics were to be selected for further elaboration during the CluStrat Project.

Feedback round among the project partners on cross-cutting issues

In the second session the opinions of the project partners were more diversified than in the first session.

There were different comments in regard to the gender topic. Some partners argued that the project should rather go for diversity and not gender only. Others commented to have it even broader, not just gender and migration backgrounds, but also young and elderly people. But it was also clear, that the project cannot go into even more complex questions like social patterns in society. After all, the topic needs to be very targeted. An expert workshop on gender and innovation in clusters, with business case studies from the Nordic countries, is proposed to give more light into this issue. Gender in itself might be complex and challenging enough for the project.

Most partners argued to include internationalisation as one of the additional topics. But there were also voices arguing, that a wide range of projects already deal with internationalisation in the cluster context, even in the CE area.

Furthermore the different directions of internationalisation were discussed. We can talk about internationalisation of clusters as well as about internationalisation of enterprises. We could target the topic internationalisation to emerging markets, like to the BRIC countries only or focus on the markets within the EU. In contrast to this others argued for market competition at global level, and thus to focus especially on Non-EU countries, for example especially the neighboring non-EU countries. It became clear, that we cannot decide now, in what extent internationalisation will be explored, but that the mapping process will look first of all in a broad sense on this issue. But due to the strategic nature of the project, it is clear that we will not look upon just bringing companies abroad – such measures are state-of-the-art in all economic development procedures.

Furthermore there was a discussion on sustainability. Due to a lack of a clear definition of the term sustainability, the partners who voted for sustainability added which dimension would be important for them. Mostly it was stated, that economic and social dimensions of sustainability should be looked at, as green technologies are already dealt with under the emerging industries.

Some partners argued for new business models as cross-cutting issue: there is a need to react on the new emerging industry sectors with new business models, be it social entrepreneurship or new financing models.

The issue of technology transfer was put into a broader view of knowledge transfer, skill development and the triple helix. As CluStrat wants to connect traditional sectors with new technologies, technology transfer will be a key issue and is a core topic within the strategy development.

In summary, it was clear to all that the CluStrat project in itself covers very complex issues. The objective to connect traditional sectors with new and key enabling technologies involves knowledge- and technology transfer. As not all of those are available in one region, this will also involve transnational / trans-regional cooperation and create new business contacts within the CE area. As value chains today are global, this will also bring internationalisation into focus. Knowledge intensive services are another topic very important for all selected emerging industry sectors. Here, new business models come into sight, where manufacturing will be connected to services and vice versa. All of these issues will be elaborated on with a view to sustainable strategies and actions.

Thus, all discussed topics are somehow covered – nevertheless the project partnership has to decide on three main cross-cutting issues to be dealt with in detail.

According to majority votes, the following two topics received most of the votes:

1. Internationalisation
2. Knowledge and Technology transfer.

The final decision was given to the Steering Committee meeting, taking place directly after the transnational policy dialogue.

The result:

The three emerging industry sectors were confirmed.

The three cross-cutting issues gender, internationalisation and technology transfer were voted by clear majority. It was decided not to go for a fourth topic to avoid too high complexity.