

Discussion Paper on Cross-cutting issues

1st Draft

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CluStrat is looking at cross-cutting issues, which are not technology related (cross-cutting technologies or enabling technologies are already identified as part of the emerging industries), but are of high importance for successful building of innovative competitive clusters.

The following paragraphs take up the cross-cutting issues mentioned in the project proposal and by the project partnership in the virtual discussion for a (linkedin and email).

Gender and Innovation

The topic of gender in the innovation process is a mandatory topic for the cross-cutting issues to be investigated in CluStrat. The draft paper on Gender and Innovation describes the state-of-the-art knowledge on this issue and first pilots in regard to clusters, which have been implemented in the Nordic Countries of the EU.

A first expert workshop on the role of clusters in regard to gender & innovation will take place in Stuttgart at 20th of March, in the context of a gender and innovation conference. This will be a transnational expert workshop, which will be open and recommended for all CluStrat partners and their policy makers.

Trans-national cooperation

Cross-sectoral and trans-national cooperation among clusters will be at the core of the development of new cluster concepts in CluStrat. This topic thus does not need to be a separate cross-cutting issue but will be one of the main elements included in the new cluster concepts anyway.

Internationalisation

The issue of internationalization of clusters is a target in many Cluster-related projects, running in CE as well as in other cooperation areas. It is also dealt with in a working group within the European Cluster Policy Alliance. Nevertheless, many policy makers have expressed their high interest to cover this topic also in CluStrat.

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South-Africa) or BRICK (Korea instead of South Africa) - the new emerging markets, must be part of the target for EU industries, especially in the emerging industry sectors. European industry and research can deliver a lot of expertise and knowledge for those emerging markets e.g. in environmental or energy related fields, as the green economy. On the other hand, EU may learn about new business models for example for micro-enterprises and micro-loans (India) from those countries.

Internationalisation was mentioned in the CluStrat project proposal as well as by regional policy makers in the discussion process. **A proposal to integrate it, besides the fact that it is already part of so many projects, could thus be to include internationalization as cross-cutting issue with a targeted view towards the BRIC.**

Knowledge / Technology Transfer

This topic was mentioned in the project proposal as possible cross-cutting issue. Knowledge transfer from science/research to industries and to a wider interested audience was also an issue in the virtual discussion.

Like internationalization, technology and knowledge transfer is a main issue for many years. And despite the fact, that uncountable studies, measures and infrastructures are available, it is still an issue, which is closely linked to exploiting the existing knowledge for innovative products and services to be deployed to the market.

The key objective of CluStrat - linking enabling key technologies with traditional sector clusters - implies in itself already knowledge/technology transfer. But as a cross-cutting issues, the mechanisms for this transfer of knowledge are to be investigated. Which infrastructures are available, and are they used by cluster organizations at all? Does it make a difference for a cluster to be involved in e.g. the technology transfer services of the Enterprise Europe Network or other supporting agencies? What specific support mechanisms would enhance knowledge transfer within clusters and among clusters?

It is thus still a valid cross-cutting issue for CluStrat.

Sustainability/Green economy

This topic was mentioned in the CluStrat proposal and mentioned as green economy by several project partners and policy makers.

Green economy is already a proposal for an emerging industry sector – as in energy efficiency of buildings, use of renewable energies, material efficiency etc.

Nevertheless, sustainability is a cross-cutting issue for all types of industry and relates to manufacturing processes, product qualities, factory and business management, services, use of resources, supply chains, etc. It is thus more than a business opportunity, but also relates to attitude and organizational behavior. It relates to the individual cluster members, but also to the cluster management. It may involve new business models, but it certainly involves new organizational cultures and attitudes. As such, it is also a valid proposal for a cross-cutting issue to be looked at. In regard to the mapping process, this cross-cutting issue would need to be more targeted – for example towards cluster management or the cluster itself rather than production processes in individual companies.

New business models

The existing industries are mainly based on products. Experts anticipate a transition from products centered business to service and solution centered business.¹ CluStrat has already reacted on this and involves not only products but also includes services within the emerging industry sectors. Thus, services are already included in the CluStrat approach. How can cluster policy encourage industries/clusters to move towards service and solution centered business models? Can policy rely on market to answer to policy objectives and incentives? These questions should be part of the strategy development anyway.

Also, the focus on sustainable production or green economy may need new business models, which are not centered on profit making but on sustainable mechanisms, which also include social responsibility towards employees and societies as well as environmental responsibilities like use of resources (energy, water, land, biomass) and climate issues. Life cycle thinking, green supply management, corporate

¹ Tactics reflection group on emerging industries, European Cluster Policy Group, March 2011

environmental and social responsibility are just some examples of key issues in this area of new business models. This topic could be included in the cross-cutting issue of sustainability/Green economy and give it a more targeted approach.

How can cluster policy encourage industries/clusters to move towards business models which have a positive social and environmental impact?

New business models as a cross-cutting issue itself may not be feasible, as it is a topic which may lead astray from the very pragmatic and targeted CluStrat approach towards new emerging industries.

Translation of RTD results into educational content and methodologies

RTD delivers new knowledge, which needs to find its way into companies, staff trainings and the educational system in general. Which knowledge transfer systems are feasible for this? How can policy support this transfer, which can then lead to spill over effects in other industry and society sectors. CluStrat could tackle the topic of emerging industries and the transfer of new knowledge regarding these sectors into lifelong learning of employees and of training for new employees / educational systems for students.

Work place innovation

New or better adapted workplace organization like tele-working, part time work, working from home etc. need to be explored for a better inclusion of all society into the emerging industries. This covers at the one hand the issue of gender and diversity – as home office is a good possibility for working mums and dads.

Diversity is more than gender – is also involves the view to ethnic minorities and their inclusion in the work place. The danger for looking at diversity only is, that gender falls behind the focus, and thus stays insolved. **Thus, gender & diversity should be tackled as one issue with two different sides which also may need different policy approaches. As such, a combination of gender with diversity is feasible.**

Conclusion

Proposal for discussion and decision in the 1st Transnational policy dialogue

Cross-cutting issues to be dealt with in CluStrat

1. Gender & Innovation, including where feasible diversity
 This would mean, that for example the statistical work in the mapping and monitoring process would include also numbers for staff with migration background. Within this topic, also working place issues like home-office etc. will be regarded.
2. Internationalisation in regard to the emerging markets (BRIC) and/or
3. Sustainability / green economy targeting the non-technological aspects and/or
4. Knowledge / Technology transfer supporting the cross-cutting of traditional and key enabling technology sectors