

THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER ALLIANCE WITHIN THE TACTICS INNO-NET PROJECT

WHAT IS THE ECA? An open platform supported by DG Enterprise and Industry fostering trans-national cooperation between policy makers to improve cluster policies for the benefit of European companies.

The overall ECA vision is to strive for excellent clusters and to make better use of these excellent clusters. The ECA aims to become an action oriented driver of better cluster policies in Europe. Its members will have a direct involvement in this policy building process over the next programming period. They will be able to participate actively in pilot initiatives and the implementation of new mechanisms and funding initiatives.

ECA members are committed to going beyond policy dialogue and to encouraging the development of cluster policy actions that will have a direct impact on the competitiveness and performance of clusters. This will notably accelerate their internationalisation but also benefit the cluster members such as companies and in particular SMEs. The ECA also expects to play an active role in developing linkages with non EU countries and zones - such as the Mediterranean Basin - interested in cluster policy dialogue.

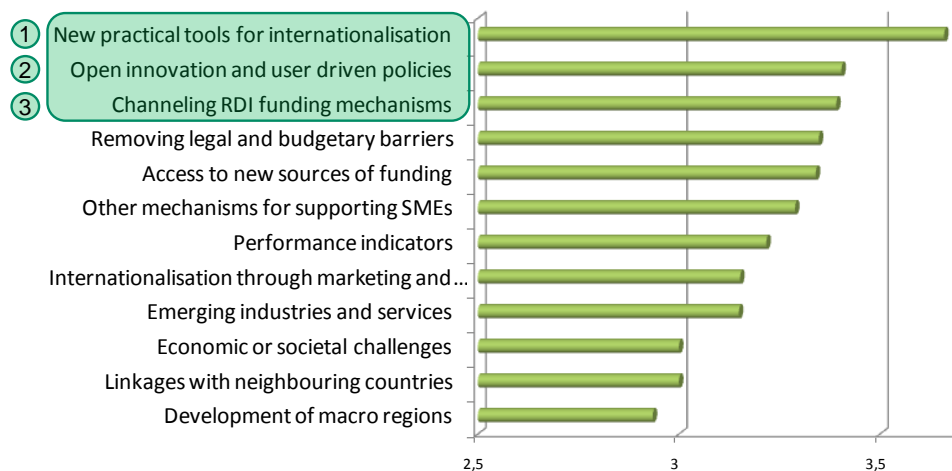


- OBJECTIVES:**
- To share the experience gained so far in cluster policies by public authorities at national and regional level in order to fine-tune existing, or develop new and improved cluster policies in the future.
 - To go beyond the identification of good cluster policies and to facilitate a true policy dialogue between those who wish to jointly advance the European cluster agenda in areas of common interest.
 - To become the single place at EU level for elaborating and exchanging new ideas and practical tools, new funding initiatives for improving cluster policies in Europe and for fostering European cooperation at policy level.
 - To increase the level of excellence and efficiency of cluster policies in Europe which will result in the continuing creation of competitive world-class clusters in Europe, as proposed by the Commission Communication on clusters.

- ACTIVITIES:
- A number of thematic workshops and cluster conferences per annum;
 - communication via the website (www.proinno-europe.eu) including regular electronic newsletters;
 - annual report on ECA activities;
 - joint meetings and exchanges between the European Cluster Observatory and the ECA and other programmes such as Regions of Knowledge, Interreg ;
 - access results of the TACTICS INNO-Net cluster project and other cluster projects and networks such as ECPG;
 - dissemination of non European cluster policy programmes;
 - an annual survey on ECA member needs.

- TARGETTED MEMBERS:
- National/regional ministries/agencies policy making bodies supporting innovation/clusters through funding programmes/actions in Europe and neighbouring countries;
 - trans-national networks between clusters (meta-clusters);
 - international/national cluster associations dealing with animation/networking of clusters at an international level.

DISCUSSION TOPICS:



Results from the survey: average score of preferred topics. Full survey available on the website.

INFORMATION ON HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER: eca-tactics@proinno-europe.eu / www.proinno-europe.eu/tactics
 Key contact persons: Michel Ganoote, Isabelle Lebo (OSEO), Marc Pattinson and Guillaume Roux (inno group).

TACTICS members: OSEO (French innovation agency), Vinnova (The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems), TMG (Upper Austria's innovation agency), NWDA (North West Development Agency, UK), IWT (Flemish Government agency for innovation), PAED (The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development), Veneto Innovazione (Veneto regional agency for innovation).