

# New cluster concepts nurture emerging industries

By cooperating in clusters, innovative firms and research institutes that work in emerging industries can make their regions more competitive. The CluStrat project suggests new ways to support cross-fertilisation of creative ideas through clusters. CluStrat provides a joint strategy on enhancing the capacity of clusters in central Europe while promoting a dialogue about helpful policy changes.

**Some clouds on** the horizon have silver linings: Global challenges, like ageing societies and climate change, are creating new market opportunities and new industries. Creative European enterprises that can address these challenges with innovative, complex products, services and business models can take advantage of new market demands. CluStrat seeks to develop new policy approaches and instruments that support these new industries by encouraging cross fertilisation between traditional and emerging industry and technology fields to develop innovative solutions. The focal point for CluStrat's work are clusters, which are

regional groupings of businesses, research and development institutions and other actors who cooperate in a related field, bringing together a critical mass of competencies along the value chain of a particular industry or type of technology. In their effort to support clusters, CluStrat partners develop a joint strategy with new cluster concepts, to equip innovation policy makers across central Europe with new approaches for fostering the cross-fertilisation of new ideas. The project focuses on cooperation between clusters not only within, but also across regions and countries. Emerg-

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**CluStrat offers a unique chance to gain new insights linked with transnational experience with regard to the implementation of Key-Enabling Technologies in traditional industries – in several of the prospective growth areas defined by Baden-Württemberg's State Government.**

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ing industries need cross-sector collaborations that address concrete problems, while taking account of the practical demands of users. Facilitating this kind of collaboration is a way to unlock regional growth and open up new markets to Europe's small and medium-sized enterprises.

## Exploring potentials

CluStrat focuses on three emerging industries:

1. active ageing;
2. sustainable development/green economy;
3. sustainable/intelligent mobility.

CluStrat partners made an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the project regions with regard to these three industries. As a result, the regional policy makers better understand the potential of their regions. They know what resources are available in industry and the research and development environment, and they also know what competencies are missing. The project also explored specific market demands in the region through interviews, policy round tables and expert workshops.

This work helps regional policy makers to better access the portfolios of other regions – and identify suitable partners for future cooperation. CluStrat tested instruments for fostering such cluster collaboration between regions, using pilot actions that involved regional cluster stakeholders and other key actors.

The project makes sense in a Europe-wide context, which is why CluStrat has been recognised as a "Light House" project within the EU strategy for the Danube Region. Furthermore, the focus on deploying local strengths while filling gaps with expertise from other regions is consistent with the idea of Smart Specialisation, a strategic approach to economic development in which regions concentrate on their strengths to support innovation.

3

Emerging Industries addressed by CluStrat

4

Transnational policy dialogue events implemented through CluStrat

1791

Cluster organisations are listed in the European Cluster Collaboration Platform for the EU

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Project: CluStrat

ERDF funding: €2 946 062

Duration: 2011 – 2014

Website: [www.clustrat.eu](http://www.clustrat.eu)