Colloquium

Cluster Policies in European Regions: Governance, Innovation and Actor Interactions

October 5-6, 2009
Venue: Audencia Nantes School of Management
8 route de la Jonelière
44300 Nantes

Organizers

Claire Champenois (Institute for Entrepreneurship, Audencia Nantes School of Management) cchampenois@audencia.com
Claire Champenois is Assistant Professor in Management and Human Resources and Director of the Institute for Entrepreneurship at Audencia Nantes School of Management. Her research focuses on innovation, biotechnology, entrepreneurship, social networks and innovation policies. She obtained a PhD in sociology from Sciences Po Paris, in collaboration with the Centre for European Economic Research in Mannheim (Germany). In this research she studied the emergence and development of the biotechnology industry in Germany. Currently, she is examining the social tools and networks supporting entrepreneurship in the Bretagne information and telecommunication technology cluster (pole de compétitivité).

Sabine Menu (Centre for European Studies, Sciences Po Paris) sabine.menu@sciences-po.fr
Sabine Menu is a Research Fellow at Centre for European Studies/Sciences Po. Her research focuses on cluster policies in Europe and their territorial dynamics, in particular in France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. She is currently working on the governance of cluster policies in the regions Ile de France and Veneto. Her PhD was obtained in public policy and sociology at Sciences Po, and in this she illustrated the modalities of the role of regional identity in shaping economic mobilizations in Bavaria, Brittany and the North East of England from 1980 to 2006.

Speakers

Our speakers will include a range of European academic experts on cluster policies and cluster development coming from different disciplines:

• Olivier Crevoisier, University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland)
• Henry Etzkowitz, University of Edinburgh Business School (United Kingdom)
• Michel Grossetti, University of Toulouse (France)
• Matthias Kiese, Leibniz University of Hannover (Germany), University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland
• Jean-Marie Izquierdo, University of Pau (France)
• Philippe Lefebvre, Mines ParisTech (France)
• Bart Van Looy, Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)
• Patrizia Messina, University of Padova (Italy)
• Markku Sotarauta, University of Tampere (Finland)
• Dimitri Tsagdis, University of Hull (United Kingdom)
• Dima Younès, SciencesPo (France)

Contact: Melinda Schleder: mschleder@audencia.com, Tél: 02 40 37 34 04
Colloquium rationale

Since 2000 European States have all committed to support technology clusters, first collectively with the adoption of the Lisbon Growth strategy, and then individually by launching cluster policies in cooperation with local authorities.

“Cluster policies” can broadly be defined as initiatives taken by public authorities, in partnership with private actors, in order to promote the concentration of companies, research centers/universities and public authorities in a specific technological area and territory. The purpose is typically to improve the innovation capability and competitiveness of territory-based firms. In practice, this notion refers to centres of excellence in Britain, Kompetenznetzwerke in Germany, poles de compétitivité in France, industrial and technology districts in Italy, and so on.

Such policies are based on two paradigms: industrial proximity as a new objective for policy action since the late 1980’s, and public-private partnerships as a key for economic growth (Storper 1997; Corò and Micelli 2006). They are attempts made by European regions and States to give a new impulse to technology and innovation support. Rather than the emergence of a single cluster policy model, a wide range of initiatives across regions and countries in Europe can be observed.

In the last decade, there has been a growing interest from scholars in economic geography, sociology and innovation studies in particular, on technology clusters and the role of local and regional spaces in shaping those clusters. However, this literature has generally examined single regional or national cases, without trying to compare and coordinate results with other cases in Europe. In addition, the issue of public policy and governance processes is rarely addressed in these contributions.

In the few contributions which have considered this question, two main approaches to cluster governance in European localities and regions are offered. First, Crouch et al. (2001, 2004) identified various forms of local governance in the frame of Local Production Systems, and called for future comparative studies on territorial governance with a multilevel approach. Second, Borràs and Tsagdis (2008) recently published a book on Cluster Policies in Europe that shows how multi-level governance (MLG) has been organized in cluster policies. More generally, this contribution analyzes the results of MLG on cluster learning dynamics. In spite of this work, there is still a need to better understand existing practices and actors’ interactions regarding cluster structuration throughout Europe as well as the role and impact of cluster policy processes on innovation and competitiveness.

This colloquium seeks to address these gaps by promoting a comparative approach to these issues. It will focus on the governance of cluster policies, that is, i) “the modalities of regulation of actors, resources, and conflicts” (Le Galès, 2006; Gaudin, 2002) in changing and unstable contexts, ii) the development of science-industry networks aiming at creating innovation. The objective is to better understand the rationales, tools and modalities of cluster policy processes in order to create new insights on how those policies find solutions to innovation challenges. In addition, comparing existing innovation practices and actor interactions in cluster policies will allow such outcomes as a typology of technology clusters and governance processes in various European countries.

The intention of the colloquium is to translate the best contributions into a journal special issue or edited book.

The first day will focus on the firm’s perspective in the innovation and value creation processes experienced by cluster-based companies. The second day will examine the policy-related processes of technology clusters in Europe.

References

- Borràs S., Tsagdis D., Cluster policies in Europe, Firms, Institutions and Governance, E.Elgar, 2008.
PROGRAMME

Monday, October 5th, 1st session: Innovation and value creation dynamics in clusters supported by public policies

8.30: Welcome at Audencia

9.00-10.00: Introduction
Claire Champenois (Audencia Nantes School of Management) and Sabine Menu (CEE Sciences Po Paris)

10.00-10.30: Keynote Speaker
Henry Etzkowitz (University of Edinburgh Business School / Stanford University) - “Entrepreneurial scientific regions, entrepreneurial universities and regional triple helix systems”

10.30: coffee break

11.00-12.30: Cluster dynamics in the European Union and in two “small” European countries
Olivier Crevoisier (Neuchâtel University) – ”Territorial knowledge dynamics in Europe: some conclusions from the EUROCIDE project”
Discussants: Gilles Certhoux and Sandrine Stervinou (Audencia)

12.30: lunch break

14.00–15.30: The French experience of “competitivity poles”
Michel Grossetti and Jean-Marc Zuliani (CNRS / Toulouse 2 University) – “Toulouse and the on-board systems cluster: a late result from one century of local and national policies”
Dima Younès (Centre for the Sociology of Organizations CNRS/Sciences Po Paris) – “Can the French government create clusters? Insights from the pole de compétitivité of the plateau de Saclay area”
Discussant: Ashveen Peerbaye (Marne-la-Vallée University)

15.30–16.00: coffee break

16.00–16.45: New modes of cluster and innovation policies in Northern Europe
Markku Sotarauta (University of Tampere) – “Whose advantage? Fine-tuning Finnish cluster and innovation policies for national competitiveness, regional advantage or...?”
Discussant: Joe Miemczyk (Audencia)

Tuesday, October 6th, 2nd session: Cluster policy processes and territorial dynamics in Europe

9.00-9.30: Keynote Speaker
Dimitri Tsagdis (University of Hull) – “European Clusters and Regions: In search of supportive policies for innovation, interaction, and governance”

9.30-11.00: Cluster policies in federal or quasi-federal states
Patrizia Messina (University of Padova) – “Cluster policy regulation in the Veneto region”
Matthias Kiese (University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, Business School; formerly Leibniz University of Hannover) – “Cluster policies in Germany, a MLG approach”
Discussant: Martine Gadille (LEST/Aix-Marseille University – CNRS)

11.00: coffee break

11.30-13.00: Regional versus state-led policies
Philippe Lefebvre (Mines ParisTech/Observatory of Poles de Competitivité) – “Governing cluster policies in France: the problems of MLG and of multi-faceted innovation policies”
Jean-Marie Izquierdo (Pau University) – “The cluster: the pivot of the industrial process of the Basque autonomous community”
Discussant: Romain Pasquier (CRAPE CNRS/IEP Rennes)

13.00: conclusions