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## CLUSTERIX 2.0 – Striving to be a step ahead in innovating policies

On 19

# CLUSTERIX 2.0



## Interreg Europe

European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

October the CLUSTERIX 2.0 partnership met in Ostrava, Czech Republic for a joint peer review of cluster policies in their regions with a specific focus on the role of clusters in the design, implementation and monitoring of Regional Innovation and Smart Specialization Strategies (RIS3). Cross-sectoral cluster cooperation (“How to do it in the best way for my region? How to do it strategically? How to select the “right” cross-cluster topics?”) was at the core of the reflections of the participants.

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The first step of the multilateral peer review were interviews with policy makers and stakeholders in all partner regions/countries based on a set of indicators which allowed an efficient process of policy benchmarking in a second step. The input of each region was benchmarked against data not only from the other partner regions but also from beyond the partnership by using the possibility to embed the structured information in a wider portfolio available at the European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis (ESCA).



The peer review as a third step gathered 35 representatives of managing authorities of structural funds, national and regional policy makers as well as implementing organisations from 10 regions. The high degree of openness of the discussions around the presented results, the availability of the participants to explain the reasons behind certain results was definitely a success factor of the reviewing process, stimulating and

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making. The presentation in benchmarking form is adequate for learning, as it does not provide any ranking of “good vs. bad”, but invites instead to reflection to questions such as: “is my region there where we would like it to be” and , important, to the “why” question.

The participants took many valuable inputs back to their regions to look further into their concrete applications. Given the broad impact clusters have in the regional economic landscape (innovation, business development, internationalisation, instalment of an attitude of cooperation among various players, it is worth mentioning that the importance of the regional cluster portfolio is often underestimated and the way the outcome of the learnings will be used should reinforce the role clusters play as an instrument of regional policy.

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