

INNOVATION CLUSTERS: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE CAPACITY AND NETWORK DYNAMICS FOR COMPETITIVE PERFORMANCE

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Abstract:

Innovation through creation, diffusion and use of knowledge has become a key driver of economic growth and provides part of the response to many new societal challenges. However, the determinants of innovation performance have changed in a globalising knowledge-based economy (OECD, 2001). Innovation results from increasingly complex interactions at local, national and global level among various types of stakeholders – business entities, universities, research institutions, public authorities, etc., clusters being an opportunity for its development. This paper examines international marketing strategies of innovative clusters aimed at creating self-sustained ecosystems from systems theory point of view. The evolution of the original concept of 'business clusters' proposed by Michael Porter (1990) is presented as theoretical background. The notion of innovative clusters as drivers of national innovation systems is considered focusing on the concept of clusters of innovation. The research examines the development of regional ecosystems (Black Sea Region) and their marketing strategies. The results of a survey of cluster managers from Black Sea Region countries are presented. The empirical contribution comes from the unique comparative data from innovative clusters in five countries and various industries, but at different stages of economic development and positioning in the global marketplace. The author focuses on the dynamics of innovative clusters and the role of knowledge and technology transfer in self-sustained ecosystems.

Keywords: innovation clusters, knowledge capacity, network dynamics, competitive performance