

The European Foundation for Cluster Excellence has the 1st Promotion of Associate Trainers in Cluster Management Excellence

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This week has been the last training sessions for the participants who attended the first “train the trainers” programme of the European Foundation for Cluster Excellence that started in December 2012. The participants have been under an intensive training programme during eight months. The training programme consisted of 6-week of in-class training sessions, taught by well know cluster actors, policy makers and academics, ran in tandem with a field project carried out by teams of participants, coached by the Foundation’s tutors.

The programme is based on the European Cluster Excellence Initiative (ECEI), a European Commission initiative providing a common platform for professional development of cluster managers and therefore transforming cluster management and policy making from a “craft”, with informal transfer of skills from experienced practitioners to the new comers to a professional discipline.



As a result of this 1st programme there are 31 participants from 19 different European regions qualified as Associate Trainers and will now start a local programme in Cluster Management Excellence in their corresponding region. The objective is to expand this methodology learnt and to become licensed Trainer to run Foundation’s training courses for cluster managers using the material – case studies and supporting material – developed by the European Cluster Excellence Initiative.

Another outcome of this 1st programme is the application in a real scenario of the Cluster Excellence Methodology. As commented before, the participants divided in teams must run a field project where they applied the theory learnt during the joint training sessions. In this regard, 13 cluster initiatives in 13 European Regions have been done in different sectors as Contract Manufacturing (furniture) in Bulgaria, Wicker in Rzeszow, (Poland), Gourmet Food in Cantabria and in Asturias, (Spain), Interior Design in Croatia, Microelectronics in Greece and in Serbia, Nature Tourism in Northern Iceland, Wedding Tourism in Killarney Ireland, Agricultural Machinery in Romania, Clothing Design in Slovakia, Technical Textile in Galicia (Spain) and Wedding Textile in Izmir (Turkey).

The course was aimed at the teams proposed by the consortia participating in the CIP Call (2011-2012), all professionals from regional economic development agencies or national industry ministries. The joint training sessions were with significant debates and fruitful interventions, which according to participant's feedback matched their expectations in terms of learning and reflection. In words of one of the participants: "It is the first time I go to a cluster training where I have to work, and not only read the case and prepare it, but then apply it with real companies when I go home".

About the European Foundation for Cluster Excellence

The European Foundation for Cluster Excellence is a non-profit, independent foundation, based in Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain). It was set up to evaluate, raise and sustain the competitiveness of regional economic clusters worldwide. Its main aim is to promote the use of clusters as an effective tool in the economic development of regions.

The Foundation has developed an objective, field-based methodology to disseminate best practices and a performance-oriented management of regional clusters.

Since the completion of the European Cluster Excellence Initiative (ECEI), the Foundation has been responsible for maintaining and updating the European Cluster Management Excellence training material, for running the instructor training course based on these material and for granting Instructor Certification.

About the European Cluster Excellence Initiative (ECEI)

The European Cluster Excellence Initiative was organized by the Innovation Unit of the EU, which grouped during 3 years 13 of the top European agencies, associations and institutions (including the Danish, German and Norwegian governments) to promote excellence in cluster competitiveness management. For more information, please visit : www.cluster-excellence.eu

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