

# **The innovative clusters**

**A pilot experiment conducted by DGTRE  
in Wallonia**

*Erik Network - Trans-Regional Workshop  
Innovation, Knowledge & Clusters*

*Bologna - Italy, 30th June - 1st July 2003*

# **The innovative clusters**

**1st Parallel session:**

**« How to develop new innovative clusters? »**

*Isabelle Pierre, DGTRE*

*Sandra Robic, ECCE*

# Wallonia: a region of Belgium

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## Belgium:

10 millions inhabitants, situated in the north of Europe, Federal state made up of 3 regional entities :

- . Wallonia, south part (*French speaking*)
- . Flanders, north part (*Flemish speaking*)
- . Brussel capital (*French and Flemish speaking*)

## Wallonia:

3,36 millions of inhabitants, 33% of the Belgian population

**Main towns in Wallonia:** Namur, Liege, Charleroi, Mons, Tournai

## Main industrial areas in growth in Wallonia:

- . Biotechnologies (*health, pharmaceutical industry...*)
- . Information and Communication Technologies
- . Aerospace Industry
- ...

# Technological Cluster Programme in Wallonia launched by DGTRE

## - 1999-2002 period -

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As part of Promethee (*RIS Project*), different missions and actions were launched by DGTRE (*General Directorate of Technologies, Research and Energy*)

- . Realisation of a **prospective study**:
  - “**The 40 key-technologies**” for Wallonia in 2010 (1999-2000)
- . Organisation of a Workshop about the study results (2000)
- . Edition and large diffusion of the book

At the end of this work, launching by DGTRE of an experimental programme to stimulate innovative clusters formation structured around the key-technologies in Wallonia :

- . 1st call of projects “Technological Clusters” (2000)
- . 2nd call of projects “Technological Clusters” (2002)

# Cluster Programme: Objective and Public intervention

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## Objective of the programme:

Strengthen innovation dynamics by stimulating partnerships and synergies within enterprises and between industry and research operators

Bottom up approach: process initiated and carried out by enterprises, the Region acting as a “facilitator”

## Public intervention (*DGTRE*):

- . Financing the work of an expert in the technological field commissioned to provide assistance in helping the cluster to organise itself, analysing the cluster's needs and objectives and drawing up an action plan.
- . Financing common methodological support to experts, co-ordination and animation by a consulting company, ECCE

## Clusters' main selection criteria

- . Composition of the partnership
- . Suitability of the proposed expert
- . Quality of the project

# Technological Clusters Organisation

## - 2 years programme -

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### Year 1

- . Market and institutional map
- . Aims
- . Means
- . *End of year projects evaluation*

### Year 2

- . Guide of required means
- . Selection of projects
- . Individual projects business plans
- . *Final year projects evaluation*

# The first 5 technological clusters selected by DGTRE

## - 2001-2002 programme -

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1. Refractorie materials recycling
2. Rapid prototyping
3. Signal-Image Treatment
4. GISDE  
*(Integrated and Securised Electronic Document Management)*
5. New Multimedia Services  
*(vocal recognition, programming tools and new multimedia products )*

# The next 5 technological clusters selected by DGTRE

## - 2003-2004 programme -

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1. Nutrition
2. Friction Stir Welding (*FSW*)
3. Mechatronics
4. Software Engineering for Industrial Applications
5. Information & Communication Technologies  
for the Graphic Industry sector

# Technological fields covered by the 10 clusters selected by DGTRE

Materials Chemical	Equipment Goods	Information Technologies	Biotechnologies Agriculture and Food industry	Environment Energy Transport-Urban
Refractories recycling	Rapid prototyping	Signal treatment	"Technological renewal" for the agriculture and food industry	Waste treatment technologies
Surface coated materials	Smart captors	Information transmission technologies	Bioengineering	"Smart" house
	Micro and nano-technologies for industrial equipment	Programmation tools ( <i>software engineering</i> )	Micro and nano-technologies for health sector	Telecommunications Systems
	Metrology equipment for environment	Voice recognition		
	Surface coated materials	Micro & nano-technologies for information and communication equipment		
	Radio-electric shielding	New multimedia services		
	Quality process management	( <i>learning, leisure, arts...</i> )		

# Innovative clusters: first results and prospects

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At the end of the first 2 years, clusters activities result in concrete operations and plans for permanent activities

*(Forums, enterprises creation, start up business, development of common R&D projects...)*

Globally, clusters are moving towards autonomy

## For the future:

- . a possible extension to other clusters covering technological fields beyond those covered by the 10 existing clusters

*(ex : materials, health, environment-energy...)*

- . interactions hoped for between existing clusters

**An innovative cluster exemple:**

**GISDE**

*(Integrated and Securised Electronic Document Management)*

# GISDE

*(Integrated and Securised Electronic Document Management)*

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## Cluster aims:

- . To develop and to offer innovative solutions to help the SME to face the problems posed by information management (*under electronic format*)

## Experts:

- . Vincent Van Breusegem (*Infopole Information Systems*)
- . Naji Habra (*Computer Institut, FUNDP*)

## Composition:

8 firms + 1 university laboratory

## Results:

- . The GISDE Forum created in 2001
- . The Connector GIE (*Economic Interest Group*) created in 2002

# The GISDE Forum and the Connector GIE

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## The GISDE Forum:

- Aims:
- . To meet each other regularly (*1 meeting every 2 month*)
  - . To exchange experiences (*invitation of outside participant*)
  - . To launch new projects

The new projects: to propose a common consulting offer for SMEs  
(*document management, application management, safety, connectic*)

## The Connector GIE:

Aims: To develop a virtual driver (*interface*)

Composition: 2 firms, member of the cluster

# Wallonia clusters

# Wallonia Cluster's

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## The first 5 innovative clusters (2001-2002):

- . **Refractories recycling** (*M Xavier Butol, Premier Refractories Belgium*) [xavier.buttol@be.vesuvius.com](mailto:xavier.buttol@be.vesuvius.com)
- . **Rapid prototyping** (*M Thierry Dormal, CRIF*) [thierry.dormal@crif.be](mailto:thierry.dormal@crif.be)
- . **Signal & Image treatment** (*Mrs Fabienne Hocquet, Ulg Enterprises-University*) [f.hocquet@crif.be](mailto:f.hocquet@crif.be)
- . **GISDE** (*M Vincent Van Breusegem, Infopole Information Systems*)  
[vincent.vanbreusegem@infopole.be](mailto:vincent.vanbreusegem@infopole.be)
- . **New Multimedia Communication Services** (*M Luc Ponsard, IM edia*) [l.ponsard@immedia.be](mailto:l.ponsard@immedia.be)

## The next 5 innovative clusters (2003-2004):

- . **Nutrition** (*M Jose Bontemps, Spadel*) [c.jadot@spawater.com](mailto:c.jadot@spawater.com)
- . **Friction Stir Welding** (*M Frederik Cambier, CRIF*) [frederik.cambier@crif.be](mailto:frederik.cambier@crif.be)
- . **Mecatronics** (*M Philippe Delneuve, CRIF*) [philippe.delneuve@crif.be](mailto:philippe.delneuve@crif.be)
- . **Software Engineering Industrials Applications**  
(*M Vincent Van Breusegem, Infopole Information Systems*) [vincent.vanbreusegem@infopole.be](mailto:vincent.vanbreusegem@infopole.be)
- . **Information and Communication Technologies for the Graphic Industry Sector**  
(*M Bernard Donnay, New Mind SA*) [b.donnay@mindnew.com](mailto:b.donnay@mindnew.com)