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EVOLUTION OF INNOVATION CLUSTER POLICY IN UKRAINE

The article deals with the main stages of evolution of the policy on creation and support of innovative clusters in Ukraine, key initiatives of the state on promotion of clusters are considered. Particular attention is paid to the formation of specific clusters and their further development in conditions of deep social and economic crisis. It is shown that innovative clusters have not yet become a widespread phenomenon in Ukraine due to a number of reasons that are analyzed in the article. The recommendations on measures of state support of innovative clusters in the context of European integration processes are developed, with the particular emphasis on the role of scientific centers. These centers could become the basis of such clusters.

Keywords:

innovation policy, clusters, legislative framework, eurointegration, cross-border cooperation.

Introduction. It is widely recognized since the previous century, that clusters play an important role in modern economic development in different regions of the world [1; 2; 3]. Ukrainian authors have also stress the need to stimulate clusters, and especially innovation clusters to foster transformation of the national economy [4].

The main goal of this article is to describe evolution of the cluster policy in Ukraine in recent years and to propose recommendations for development of innovation clusters in the country.

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The first official document on cluster policy in Ukraine was prepared in 2008, when «*Concept of creation of clusters in Ukraine*» was published by the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine [5]. This document identified the prospects of implementation of the cluster approach in the economy, highlighted the advantages of cluster organization of production / manufacturing for the domestic economy, and defined the conceptual basis of clusters.

The Concept proposed to distinguish four types of clusters:

- production clusters (especially, in auto, aircraft and shipyard sectors);
- innovation and technological clusters (geographically localized companies, linked by the innovation product chains);
- tourism clusters;
- transport and logistics clusters.

On the base of the above-mentioned concept, «*National goal-oriented program for industrial development in Ukraine to 2017*» was adopted by the government (2008). Its implementation assumed the setting up of the cluster model in the national economy. It also created some preconditions for the introduction of legal acts, aimed at further developing state cluster policy in the Ukrainian economy. In May 7th, 2008, the Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine issued a Decree No 703, which made it difficult to undertake joint activities of predominantly state-owned companies and other state organizations (research institutes, universities and so on) with non-state firms and foreign companies. These activities had to be ensured by the special permission of the Cabinet of Ministries (this Decree remained in force till 2012).

In 2009 another draft of «*National Strategy formation and development of cross-border clusters*» was prepared. Its main purpose was to help to solve problems associated with asymmetries in Ukraine's regional development, the outflow of its labor intellectual and other resources in border countries, as Ukraine lagged behind them in terms of quality of life, investment attractiveness, competitiveness and level of innovation. To overcome these deficiencies, the government planned to establish cross-border cooperation with companies from these countries and to create and to develop cross-border clusters.

Later, the *Concept of the State Target Economic Program of industrial development for the period till 2020* was adopted by Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [6] in 2013. In particular, a goal was established, promoting innovation in all promising areas of economic activity through the *creation of scientific innovation and industrial clusters in high-tech brunches of industries*, based on the commercialization of their scientific research results, using idle production capacities of state enterprises and brunch research institutions.

Despite the fact that not all these documents have become the laws, they have opened the way for the creation of some cluster-type organizations in Ukraine, as well as three EU-cross-border clusters, partially funded by the EU. On the other hand, it is worth to mention that there was no special cluster-oriented state program in Ukraine in 2000–2010s. No funding from the state budget supported specific cluster-oriented initiatives in these years.

Recent legislation and legal initiatives, promoting the creation and development of clusters in Ukraine. The legal basis for the formation of innovation clusters and activity in Ukraine is in Chapter 77 of the Civil Code of Ukraine, entitled «*Contract on the joint activity*». It opens the way for legal facilitation of the joint activities of different companies on the basis of standardized contracts. Clusters are mentioned as a specific form of such joint activities. Thus, companies in the cluster could, in principle, formalize their relations. At the same time, the law entitled «*Priorities of innovation activities in Ukraine*» has identified several priority areas of innovation activity in Ukraine [7].

The *Priorities of innovation activities in Ukraine* orders the executive power bodies of Ukraine of all levels to create the most favorable conditions for the implementation of priority-oriented innovation activities and the concentration of financial, economic and intellectual resources on them.

According to this law, the implementation of strategic priorities for innovation is one of the most important tasks of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, central executive bodies, National and branch Academies of Sciences of Ukraine, as well as innovative structures, created with the state support. In this context the efforts of the government, the National and branch Academies of Sciences of Ukraine are being made, despite some important problems of commercial activities of institutes of the academies still have to be solved.

Nowadays ideas of creation and support of clusters in the Ukrainian economy have become more popular, and the government has included them into its official documents, including the *Action Plan of the Cabinet of Ministries of Ukraine* (2015) [8] and into some programmes and tasks of specific ministries.

The new law entitled «*On Scientific and Scientific-Technological Activity*» [9] was enacted on January 16, 2016. One of the most important innovations of this document is the establishment of a permanent advisory body, the National Council of Ukraine on Science and Technology under the auspices of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the main purpose of which is to ensure an effective interaction between representatives of the scientific community, governmental agencies, and industry.

The document introduces the rule according to which public research institutions and state universities, academies, institutes are entitled to be co-founders of the economic societies with the aim of use of intellectual property.

Other legal initiatives described below are also aimed at supporting innovative development and influencing cluster-related activities:

- The draft of «*Strategy of development of high-tech industries by the year 2025*» (prepared by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine in 2016) [10] lists a series of measures aimed at creating an effective ecosystem of technological parks, scientific and industrial clusters. The Strategy contains a range of measures designed to bridge the gap between the system of creation and the system of implementation of created knowledge in innovation and production.

Some cluster-related initiatives are associated with the country's leading research organizations, universities and NGOs. For example, the National Aca-

demy of Sciences of Ukraine plays an active role in this process. In recent years, the Academy took part in the following actions:

- Participation in the creation of the National Association of Scientific, Technological Parks and other innovative organizations [11] in Ukraine.
- Adoption of a Resolution by the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (No 176) on the 10.06.2009 with a specific chapter on «*Scientific support of formation of the new type of innovative structures in Ukraine – national innovation clusters*».
- Adoption of a Resolution on the *Presidium of NAS of Ukraine* (No 220) on the 08.07.2009 focusing on «*The order of construction/development of National Innovative Clusters*» [12]. This Resolution adopted recommendations on the formation and operation of innovation clusters in Ukraine, which, inter alia, contained a definition of innovative structures and innovative cluster specified goals and objectives of national and industrial innovative clusters.

NGOs are more active in training and information spheres relating to cluster formation. The experience of some developed countries shows that specially trained cluster managers are the key for success of cluster initiatives. This was taken into account in Ukraine: recently, several civil society organizations, NGOs and Universities have started various projects, aimed at providing assistance in the process of cluster formation and the activity intensification of clusters.

Examples of such activities include:

- Support to the creation of the National Association of Scientific-Technological parks and other innovative organizations in Ukraine. It has been created with the assistance of the Ministry of Science and Education and of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The initiator of the Association creation was the International Fund of Assistance to Investment – a Ukrainian NGO.
- Ukrainian Clusters Portal [13] – connects members of Ukrainian regional clusters – entrepreneurs, academic community, local government officials. It was created by entrepreneurs Stanislav Sokolenko and Sergei Sokolenko and by the International Foundation for Market Assistance. This International Foundation for Market Assistance was founded in 1997 to promote the development of the market economy in Ukraine. The Foundation conducts studies of newly-emerging regional clusters in Ukraine and assists their organizers. The Foundation formed the Competitiveness Institute in 2002 to help to improve the economic conditions in Ukraine. The Institute assists in development of national and regional competitiveness programs based on networked valued chains – clusters, strategic partnerships and alliances. The main purpose of the Ukrainian Clusters Portal is to support Ukrainian entrepreneurs and remove the barriers for their communication and cooperation.
- A private consultancy company entitled the *Cluster University* has been established on the basis of The International Foundation for Market Assistance and the Cluster Portal. Over the past years, the Foundation's representatives have organized training seminars and made presentations at a large number of conferences in Ukraine and abroad [14].

• Since 2012, the department of the leading Ukrainian University Kyiv Mohyla Academy — Kyiv Mohyla Business School (KMBS) has been building an expertise in cluster development. KMBS experts studied world practices of cluster initiatives in the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Estonia, the US, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. *Business Clusters* is a compulsory course for all KMBS MBA programs. Additionally, the business school cooperates with authorities of the main cities and regions of Ukraine to initiate clusters in Ukraine. The School represents Ukraine in the TCI Network, a global network of more than 9,000 experts on cluster development and regional competitiveness [15]. Kyiv Mohyla Business School, in conjunction with the Cluster Navigators International Agency announced the first national selection of managers to work on its *Develop Ukraine* program, aimed at training the management elite in Ukraine. They have established «*CLUST-UA*», which is a Ukrainian cluster development agency [16], aimed to help Ukraine become an important part of the global economy by improving the efficiency of Ukrainian clusters. The agency is an NGO specialized in implementing cluster initiatives, policies and innovations in Ukrainian economy by facilitating the process of collaboration at the local, regional, national, and international levels, and by fostering synergy actions between industries, investors, regulators, and civil society. The Agency provides consultancy in several areas, such as: corporate governance technologies for support of cluster efficiency and improvement of performance; contemporary professional economic development solutions and techniques for analysis, mediation, leadership, and management; sustainable approaches, based on triple bottom-line efficiency principle; cluster identification, institutionalization, life-cycle management, and collaboration. Through its services, the Agency is offering to: link stakeholders to clusters through networking and partnership to pave the way for matchmaking and shared developmental priorities; support cluster policy's participants and regulators' with organizational services, expertise, and trainings; help in cluster development strategy design and implementation; market research and coordination of cluster participants' joint marketing programs; support Ukrainian clusters cooperation with partners from abroad; assist in communication and organization support in accessing funding opportunities for Ukrainian Cluster initiatives and projects; train Cluster initiative participants and assess their relevant competences; support Ukrainian clusters' participation in international exhibitions and conferences; give an expert assessment of Ukrainian cluster projects, programs, and initiatives.

Creation and development of clusters in Ukraine. The first attempts to create clusters were made in the mid-1990s in the Podillia economic region (Western Ukraine). The first official cluster «Podillia Pershiy» was set up in Ukraine in 1998 in the Khmelnytsky region. The idea of creating this cluster with multiple specializations (in clothing, building materials and agro sectors) was supported by the Khmelnytsky oblast administration (regional authorities). Because the region had not sufficiently developed industrial potential and had limited opportunities for investment, the core cluster was made from predominantly small and medium

enterprises with different ownership structures. It was aimed at the promotion of regional production and the export of highly competitive products through the involvement of all cluster's internal resources. It was crucial that the cluster had assistance of the regional administration, scientific and educational centers, financial and banking institutions of the region. The USAid has provided substantial financial support for the initiative. The cluster has included 24 companies and research and educational organizations, which provided expertise. However, after the termination of the aid program from the American donor and use to economic problems, the activity of the cluster (and its visibility) has declined [17]. In 2012—2015 most of the regional public administrations proposed special programs of economic and social development for the period 2013—2020. These programs included recommendations, related to the creation and development of innovative industrial clusters. The implementation of the programs (or strategies) included the development and implementation of action plans, and the creation of appropriate institutions and mechanisms for setting up clusters in the corresponding regions. However, these initiatives have weak financial and organizational support, which creates barriers for cluster development. According to researches, about 50 clusters were functioning in different regions and industries of Ukraine in the period 2012—2014, including:

- Vinnytsia region: Vinnitsa food processing cluster;
- Volyn region, forest and tourist-recreational clusters;
- Dnipropetrovsk (Dneper) region: national innovation cluster «New cars»;
- Donetsk and Luhansk regions: national innovation cluster «New technologies of natural resources use»;
- Zhytomyr region: forest and recreational clusters;
- Transcarpathian region: transport and logistics cluster;
- Zaporozhye region: technological innovation cluster «AhroBUM», cluster of honey industry «Bee knows no boundaries», food cluster “Buy Zaporozhye products!”;
- Ivano-Frankivsk region, a cluster of souvenir production «Constellation»;
- Kiev region: national innovation cluster «Energy for sustainable development», national innovation cluster «Technology innovation society», national innovation cluster «Innovation culture society», national innovation cluster «New foods»;
- Lviv region: Lviv cluster of IT and business services;
- Odessa: cluster «Transit potential of Ukraine»;
- Poltava region: a regional cluster of environmentally friendly products;
- Rivne region: a cluster of wood;
- Sumy region: a regional cluster of environmentally friendly products, Sumy building cluster;
- Ternopil region: innovation and investment cluster;
- Kharkiv region: Kharkiv industrial park «Technopolis», a cluster of alternative energy and scientific-educational cluster, etc .;

- Kherson region: transport and logistics cluster «Southgate of Ukraine»;
- Khmelnytsky region: rural tourism cluster, Khmelnytsky building & constructing cluster, Khmelnytsky sewing cluster; Kamenets tourist cluster.

Information about operation of Ukrainian clusters is fragmented and non-transparent. Some of these clusters are 'self-proclaimed' and they have not demonstrated visible results in the past. However, a brief description of some clusters is presented below.

The purpose of the cluster initiative in Transcarpathian region is the revival of traditional crafts of Hutsul mountain districts. In 2000, the Regional Cluster «Constellation» was created as the first structure in the sphere of tourism, production of souvenirs and wool products.

Forming a timber cluster in Rivne region was carried out within the project «Development of entrepreneurship in northern Rivne region».

In town Rokitne (near Rivne, Volyn region) there is successfully operating wood cluster «Polesie of Rokytno region», created on November 14, 2003. The structure of the cluster includes four companies and 4 private entrepreneurs with small production facilities; 2 cooperatives — agricultural service cooperative «Sukivskyi», Forestry Cooperative «Peasant forest». Overall, the tourism industry is one of the most promising for clustering, because almost every region in Ukraine has unique tourist potential, which can be effectively used, — applying the cluster model — to facilitate the development of its related structural elements — production of goods of daily use, rural tourism, trade, transport, communications and other services.

The cluster of transport and tourism «Southgate Ukraine» was created in the Kherson region in Southern Ukraine. This project was part of the Kherson Oblast Development Strategy till 2015. In 2005, the cluster «Southgate Ukraine» was registered as an association of enterprises (it included 3 commercial sea ports, ports, 5 shipment companies and other organizations). Now it consists of 106 companies of the transportation sector, tourism and resort and recreational complex, advertising and information enterprises, publishing houses, construction companies, local authorities and NGOs.

A special development in the Khmelnytsky region has concerned touristic clusters, aimed at using and promoting local natural resources. Specific attention was paid to the unique cultural heritage of the region, and a cluster of agro-eco-tourism «Oberih» was formed, based on the utilization of high potential of recreational, historical and cultural resources of this territory.

It is important to mention that only a small number of clusters can be associated with the high tech sector in Ukraine. One of them is the ICT cluster in the Lviv region. It is formed on the basis of several local companies and universities. At the end of 2015, it comprised 25 companies and more than 7000 employees [18]. This cluster has a special managerial department, which consists of 8 persons, who provide different services for the cluster members, including legal support, marketing research, information about possible contracts and so on. The cluster has its representative office in neighboring Poland.

The ICT cluster partners cooperate in the following areas:

- Promotion:

The Lviv IT Cluster is a partner and organiser of several events. Amongst others, it organises the «Lviv IT Arena» which gathers 1,000 participants and 100 speakers, making it one of the largest IT conferences in Ukraine. Furthermore, as part of the Lviv IT Tour, a roadshow with conferences in Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Odessa has been carried out. Members benefit from the promotion and loyalty program of the «Lviv IT Club», which is supported by 200 partners and offers discounts on accommodation, traveling, flight tickets and other services.

- Education:

Every year, the Lviv IT Cluster supports an IT Competition in Lvian schools in collaboration with Lviv City Council and the Lviv Polytechnic. The project «IT Expert» aims at modernizing the curriculum of programs at Lviv Universities. Together with Lviv Business School, a new master program in technology management has been developed. Furthermore, cluster members benefit from a unique database of Lviv IT School graduates.

- Infrastructure:

The cluster develops innovative housing projects, such as the IT House, offering 72 apartments, an underground parking and a roof terrace to be completed in 2017.

- Business development:

The Lviv IT Cluster has a representative office in Poland which helps member companies open offices in EU countries and provides visa support. There is a law committee within the cluster. It provides assistance to member companies in legal matters and develops recommendations on current legislative and regulative issues in Ukraine. Furthermore, the cluster provides market related information. For example, one report was done on the Lviv IT market and industry. The cluster is organized in the legal form of an association. The cluster management has currently eight employees, and is financed by membership fees and paid services.

The ICT cluster is a good example of a successful IT cluster in Ukraine. More IT clusters could be created in other Ukrainian regions, especially in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, as the country has a substantial (and growing) number of IT specialists and companies.

It is also possible to expect, that in the near future innovation clusters to be created in the area of new materials, where Ukraine has traditions in production and R&D. The overall objective of the initiative is creating new materials in such areas, as transportation technologies, medicine and environmental protection by the implementation of the results of systematic research and subsequent commercialization through the public-private partnership mechanisms.

Conclusions. Ukraine has formed some clusters that operate successfully, but the potential of cluster development is still not used in a full scale, especially at the regional level [19]. Clusters are represented in different regions of Ukraine and they vary in size, institutional forms and functions. The institutionalization

of cluster development is an important prerequisite for successful clustering in Ukraine. In many cases, the formation of cluster associations is a key factor for the effective economic transformation of the region, helping develop highly competitive products, acquiring new technologies and attracting investment. There is a possibility to create cluster associations in different sectors of the regional economy in such regions as Transcarpathia, Lviv, Kharkiv, etc. and even cross-border clusters with partners from the EU countries. The creation of several international transport corridors, some passing through the territory of Ukraine, (the Transcarpathian, Lugansk, Odessa, Kherson, etc.) should help Ukraine develop cross border clusters. Clusters could also appear in some new sectors. Despite a growing interest in new forms of economic organization, including clusters, the number of clusters in Ukraine grows slowly.

This is due to several factors:

- Lack of national legislation, with institutions supporting cluster activities. There is no legal definition of «cluster» in Ukraine. It would be useful, if the government will adopt the concept of cluster policy at local, regional and national levels.

- Lack of sufficient information on establishing and the functioning of existing clusters in Ukraine.

- Unwillingness of SMEs to pool resources within larger production organization, including formal clusters.

- Poor experience of existing clusters in Ukraine in establishing co-operation between the cluster participants.

- Relatively low attractiveness of the country and its regions for potential foreign investors due to economic problems and unresolved military conflict in the East of the country.

- Misunderstanding of the importance of educational and training programs for the potential cluster participants.

The country should initiate a pilot program, which will help to identify several clusters with high potential. These clusters could receive organizational and financial support both from internal and external sources with the guarantees of the government. Such program could be implemented with the assistance of international and domestic experts.

It should be emphasized that the Ukrainian economy could benefit not only from ‘domestic’, but also from cross-border clusters. The latter could contribute to the development of international cooperation between Ukraine and bordering regions, especially with the EU states.

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ЕВОЛЮЦІЯ ПОЛІТИКИ ЩОДО ІННОВАЦІЙНИХ КЛАСТЕРІВ В УКРАЇНІ

У статті розглянуто основні етапи еволюції політики щодо створення та підтримки інноваційних кластерів в Україні, проаналізовано основні ініціативи держави щодо стимулювання кластерів. Спеціальну увагу приділено становленню конкретних кластерів та їх подальшому розвитку в умовах глибокої соціально-економічної кризи. Показано, що інноваційні кластери ще не набули поширення в Україні внаслідок низки причин, які аналізуються у статті. Розроблено рекомендації щодо заходів з державної підтримки інноваційних кластерів у контексті євроінтеграційних процесів, зокрема підкреслено роль наукових центрів, які можуть стати основою таких кластерів.

Ключові слова: *інноваційна політика, кластери, законодавча база, євроінтеграція, трансгранична співпраця.*

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ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ ПОЛИТИКИ В ОТНОШЕНИИ ИННОВАЦИОННЫХ КЛАСТЕРОВ В УКРАИНЕ

В статье рассмотрены основные этапы эволюции политики по созданию и поддержке инновационных кластеров в Украине, проанализированы основные инициативы государства по стимулированию кластеров. Особое внимание уделено становлению конкретных кластеров и их дальнейшему развитию в условиях глубокого социально-экономического кризиса. Показано, что инновационные кластеры еще не получили широкого распространения в Украине в результате ряда причин, которые анализируются в статье. Разработаны рекомендации по мерам государственной поддержки инновационных кластеров в контексте евроинтеграционных процессов, в частности подчеркнута роль научных центров, которые могут стать основой таких кластеров.

Ключевые слова: *инновационная политика, кластеры, законодательная база, евроинтеграция, трансграничное сотрудничество.*