



TRAns-national Collaboration Empowering Key European Industries TRACE-KEI project



*2018 TCI European Conference
Panel: Successful Networks, topic – Successful Projects
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Our cluster



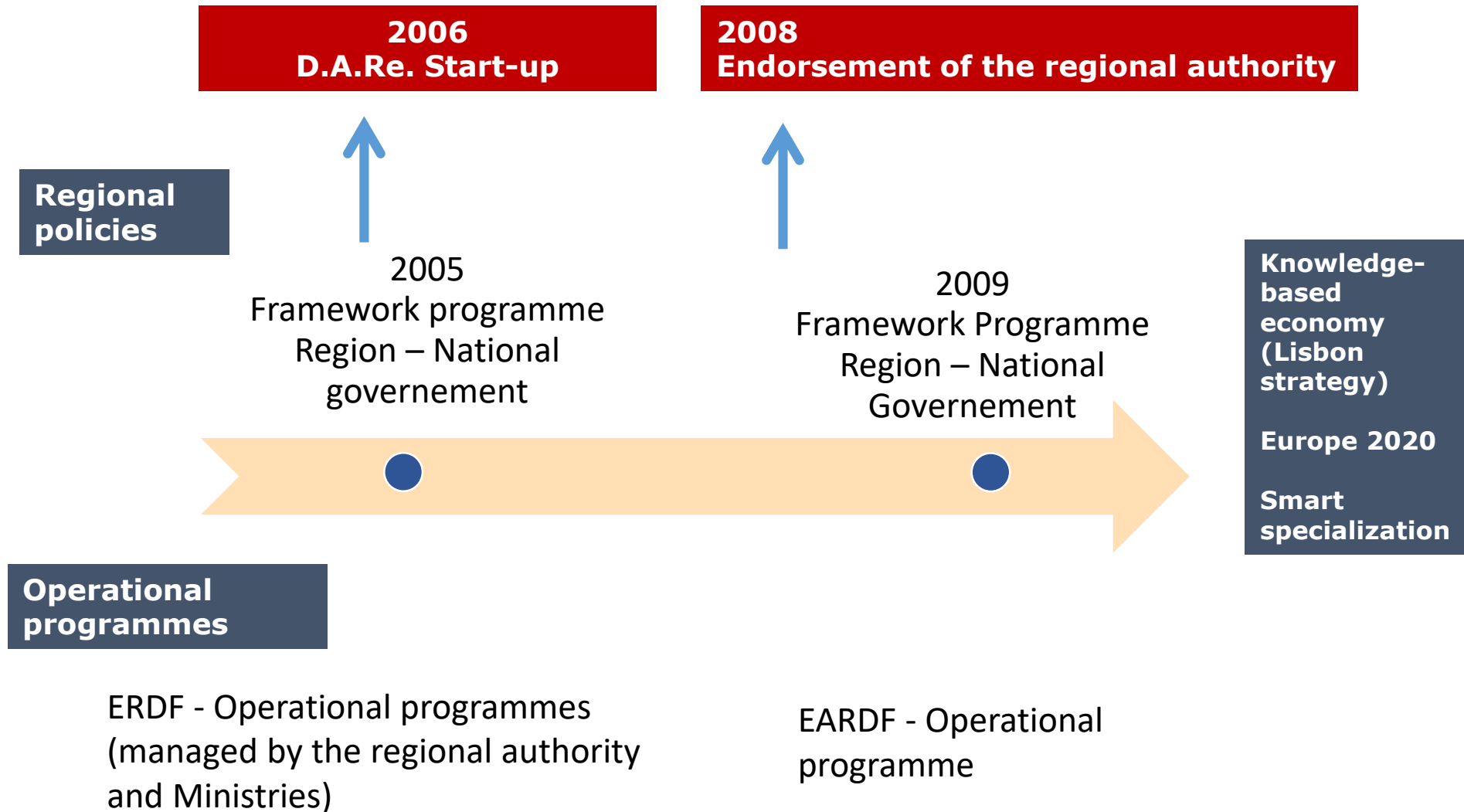
DARe Puglia is a private company participated by Research organizations, Universities, SMEs, farmer and industrial associations with the aim to improve the innovation potential of the agrofood sector in the Region.

It supports public-private collaborations to deliver better, health quality and sustainable products and processes, covering the following technological domains:

- Functional foods
- Mild technologies and Biotechnologies
- Packaging and Convenience
- Food safety
- Eco-sustainable process and products



The policy background



The national experiences

€ 34 billions

Functional
food

Innovative
Products

Packaging

Food safety

Sustainable
Solutions

5 Large collaborative projects and connected training projects were approved and implemented from 2011 to 2015
(4 master courses and 3 highly specialised post-graduate courses – 90 people trained)

The European experiences



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COS-CLUSTER-2015-3-02



RURITAGE JUST APPROVED
SC5-21-2016-2017



LCE-2015-3



INCluSilver

INNOSUP-2016-1

SEVERAL PROPOSALS
UNDER EVALUATION

Interreg



TRAns-national Collaboration Empowering Key European Industries - **TRACE-KEI** – is a COSME Cluster Excellence project aiming at strengthening **cluster organizations** to provide more **professional business services** to their associates and contribute to develop **world-class clusters** in the EU.

To meet these objectives, TRACE-KEI clusters are achieving the following activities:

- **Mapping and evaluating** the **range** and **quality of services** provided to their associates, SMEs firstly;
- **engage associates** in the assessment of clusters' performances and develop a **renewed / redesigned strategy** to meet SMEs' needs and expectations;
- **Ease the dialogue with policy makers and boost** any possible convergence with the **regional policy and operational frameworks**;
- Identify **cross-sectorial collaboration opportunities in the participating territories**;
- **Share cross-borders opportunities** at Consortium level and beyond



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Our consortium



Co-funded
by the COSME programme
of the European Union

50 overall staff
addressed by the
project

Two macro-regions
involved

>300 SMEs
represented by the
TRACE-KEI clusters

TRACE-KEI

Agro-food

ICT

Energy

1 silver label and 3
bronze label clusters
involved

Italy
Romania



Hungary
Portugal



Germany
Serbia
Bulgaria



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The project workplan

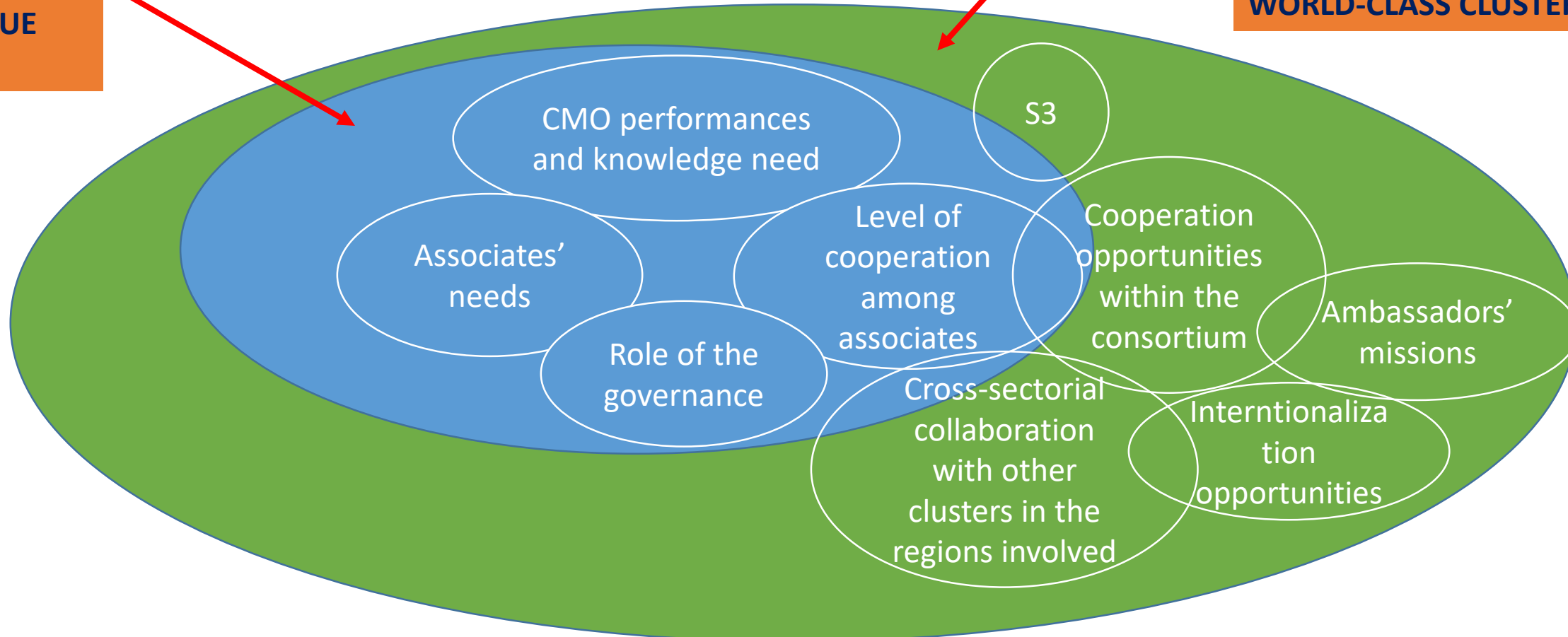
Internal ecosystem

External ecosystem

Strategy formulation

**ADDED-VALUE
SERVICES**

WORLD-CLASS CLUSTER



1. ... to improve or introduce added-value services?
2. ... to improve CMO performances and skills?
3. to interact with associates and involve them?
4. to fill the gap between cluster initiatives and regional/national government for the benefit of our associates?
 1. ... to fill the gap among associates and clusters?
 2. ... to renew and redesign our strategies accordingly?

CLUSTER MANAGERS

CLUSTER MEMBERS

CLUSTER ORGANIZATIONS



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Cluster managers' internal assessment



Co-funded
by the COSME programme
of the European Union

Clusters' practices alignment
towards ESCA benchmarking



**Cluster excellence assessment for 3 participating
clusters awarded with the bronze label**



Services mapping and
assessment

Mapping of services by surveying 7 cluster' managers

- They were asked about:
- the CIs' initial goals (must be monitored over time)
- The services provided (more fee-based services to be introduced)
- The financial sustainability (is very unpredictable)
- The number of committed participants (need to increase by face to face meeting)



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Cluster managers' skills improvement

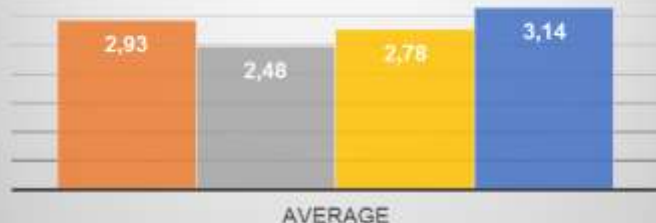


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of the European Union

Assessment of Managers' performances to deliver a 6 services portfolio, built upon those provided by gold label clusters.



Average Trainees



Knowledge gaps assessed towards the «core modules» identified by the European Foundation for Cluster Excellence

2 Joint Trainings organised and addressed to 14 cluster managers: the 1st in Bari (Italy) focussed on value-chain analysis and industry analysis
the 2nd in Budapest (Hungary) focussed on business planning and cluster branding + two workshops on Internationalization and change management



2 study visits performed with qualified clusters.

- Femac, a Spanish gold label cluster,
- C2C networking event with Hungarian Accredited Clusters

TRACE-KEI mentoring programme



Expected services

Associates SMEs' satisfaction (15 companies by each participating cluster)

- the satisfaction of the cluster performance in general
- the usefulness of the services provided
- Their interest in introducing tailor-made services and readiness to pay for it.

General conclusion: further meetings by involving the members are needed to meet their expectations; and the strategic board should take further decisions

Shared strategy

- **Vision**
- **Mission**
- **Goals**
- **Services**
- **Financial sustainability**
- **Indicators**



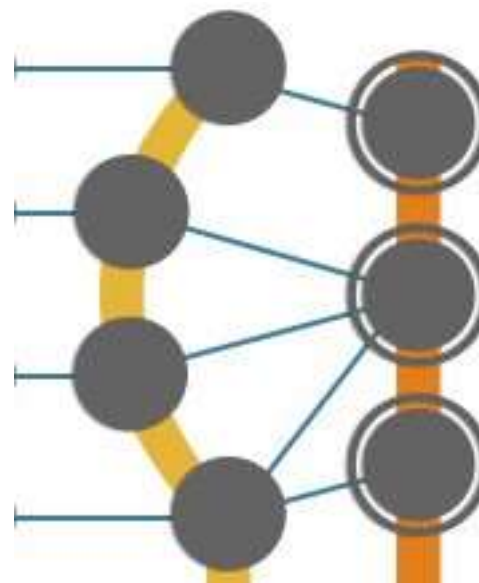
Cross-sectorial
collaboration within
the cluster and among clusters



Other stakeholders' contribution



International partnerships



S3 and funding opportunities

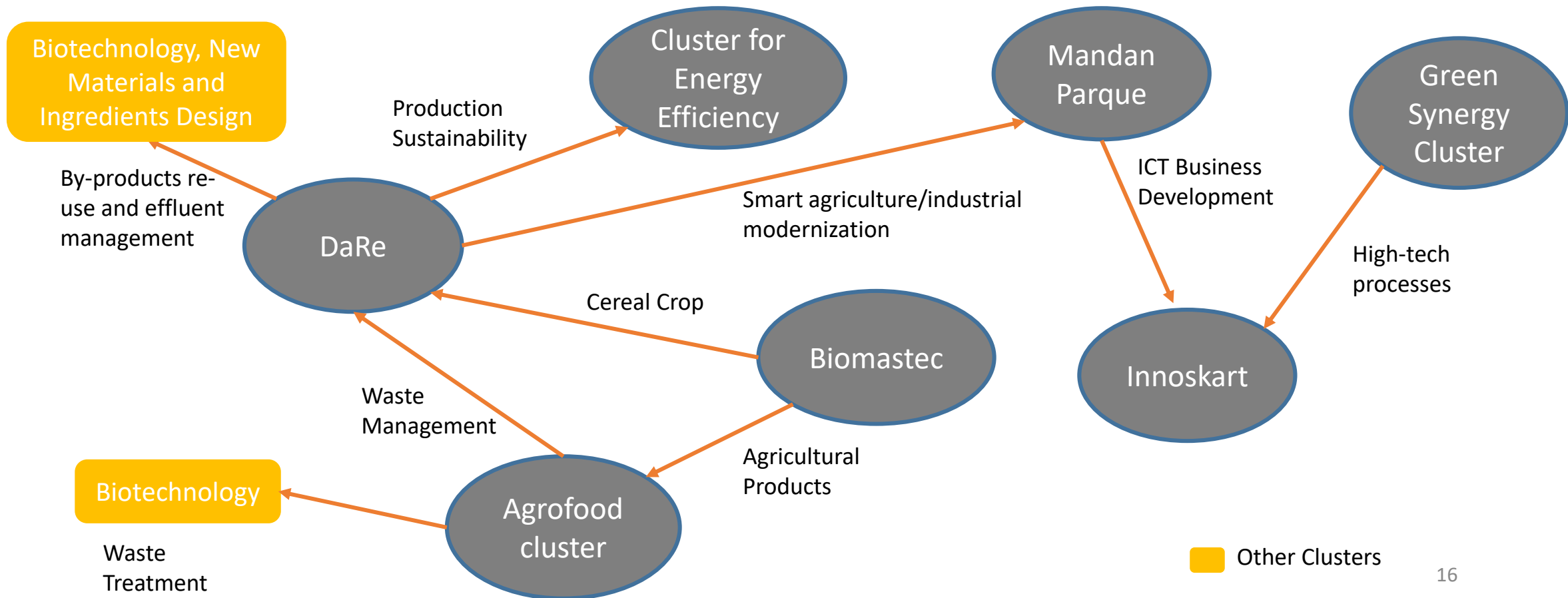


- Concrete and well developed RIS3 strategies can be found in the partner's region and/or at least at National level
- The food industry, ITC and renewable energy are important target sectors of the strategies, but not always the available funding specifically address these sectors;
- Clusters are important actors for the regional development but they have not been assigned a specific role in the RIS3 analysed
- Associates are ready to develop and to participate, but there is a need for reliable and usable funding schemes

The role of clusters according to policy makers

- Policy Makers recognise the clusters strategic role
- In every region, can be expected future funding options for the clusters and their associates
- As Clusters are private entities, the available fundings would be assigned on a competitive way
- Synergies with other clusters in different sectors is a rather weak point of the clusters from the regions

- By creating cross-sectorial collaborations within the cluster and among clusters



At Consortium Level



At inter-Consortia Level



INNO-
DROP
Plasma &
water
technology



Ict



Life
sciences

Main conclusions and future steps

Having identified the main drivers and barriers, the further steps will contribute to ensure in the long run:

Orientate our clusters' strategies according to these results

Continuous learning

Leverage cluster initiatives at regional level

Spreading practices to other clusters and promote cooperation

- The extension of fee-based services that should be more networking oriented
- The clusters' financial sustainability to be periodically monitored
- The increase of the professional trainings both for the staff and associates in order to ease cluster growth and reputation
- The continuous dialogue with policy makers to obtain a more focussed support for Cluster's initiatives
- Involvement of academia and other relevant stakeholders
- The increase of collaboration opportunities with other sectors/clusters at regional/national level, at Consortium level and beyond



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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<https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/eu-initiatives/cluster-excellence/trace-kei-trans-national-collaboration>

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