



Catalunya pionera en iniciatives clúster

Catalunya ha estat un dels països pioners, a nivell internacional, en impulsar els clústers com a eina per millorar la competitivitat de les empreses. Enguany es compleixen 25 anys de l'inici de la política de clústers a Catalunya el 1992.

El caràcter pioner i l'enfocament innovador de la política de clústers a Catalunya fou destacat pel pare intel·lectual d'aquesta metodologia, el professor de Harvard, [Michael E. Porter](#), en el seu llibre de referència "[On Competition](#)".



Michael E. Porter, *On Competition*, (Boston, 1998)

ization of concepts, relationships, and linkages among constituencies. In the private sector, new or revitalized trade associations often take leading roles in the continuing upgrading of clusters. In government, cluster upgrading can be institutionalized by appropriately organizing government agencies, organization through the gathering and dissemination of economic statistics, and by controlling the structure and membership of business advisory groups.

Summary

A cluster is a system of interconnected firms and institutions the whole of which is greater than the sum of the parts. Clusters play an important role in competition, and these raise important implications for companies, governments, universities, and other institutions in an economy. Clusters represent a new and complementary way of understanding an economy, organizing economic development, and setting public policy. Understanding the state of clusters in a location provides important insights into the productive potential of its economy and the constraints on its future development. Paradoxically, then, the most enduring competitive advantages in a global economy will often be local.

Microclusters in Catalonia

History

Catalonia is one of Spain's seven autonomous regions, accounting for 13 percent of the national population but almost 30 percent of its GDP and about 40 percent of its industrial exports. In December 1980, Amadeu Solà was appointed Catalonia's Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. Soon after, he obtained a manuscript copy of *The Competitive Advantage of Nations* and circu-

lated several chapters within the region's industrial competitiveness and for identifying areas in which the government could improve the environment for companies.

Acción

Initially, Solà asked Professors Edward Ballarín and Josep Faus from IESE, a top business school based in Barcelona, to apply the cluster methodology to the study of Catalonia's industry. Their preliminary work set the stage for a larger report, prepared together with Monitor Company, a consulting firm. The report offered an overall diagnosis of Catalonia's strengths and weaknesses and was well received. It defined groups of clusters (for example, mass-market consumption goods) and provided some general guidelines about what was needed to enhance their competitive advantage.

Solà decided to take this work one step further and to study discrete clusters in more detail. Already-existing capabilities within the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Commerce were reorganized, and a local consulting firm—CLUSTER Competences—was asked to lead a series of cluster initiatives. Each study involved companies, suppliers, trade associations, business schools, universities, and many government departments.

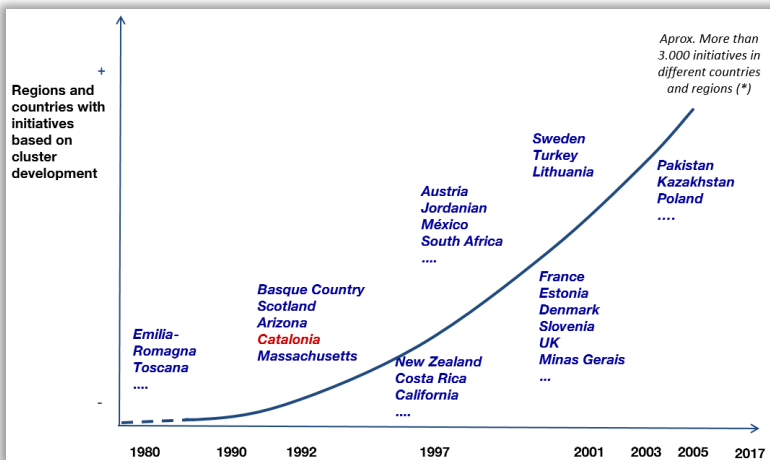
Since then, approximately twenty Catalan clusters have been studied in detail. As of 1997, clusters continued to be used in Catalonia as the main methodology for assessing the

region's industrial competitiveness and for identifying areas in which the government could improve the environment for companies.

Each microcluster study included firms, suppliers, universities, and a wide range of other interested participants. Cluster boundaries and participation emerged as a result of the study process. Self-selection was the rule: All firms interested in participating were considered part of the cluster.

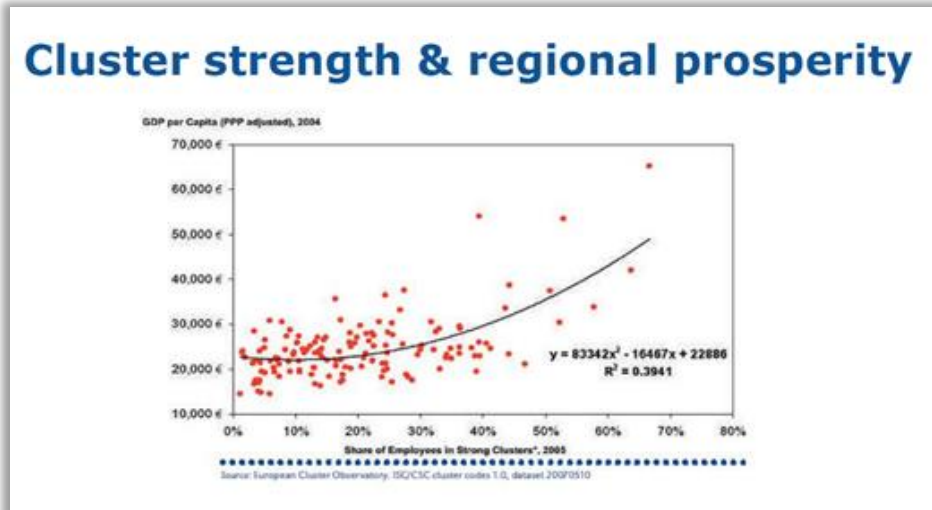
All clusters were viewed as equally desirable. For practical reasons, however, cluster studies were sequenced. Some clusters were initially much better organized than others. One goal of the process was to establish effective trade organizations to serve each cluster.

Process of Change
The cluster studies in Catalonia took place in three stages. In the first, the cluster's problems and opportunities were identified and the basic concepts of cluster upgrading, such as the goal of enhancing rather than suppressing competition, were laid out. At times, the study revealed a view of the cluster's problems that differed from that presented by com-

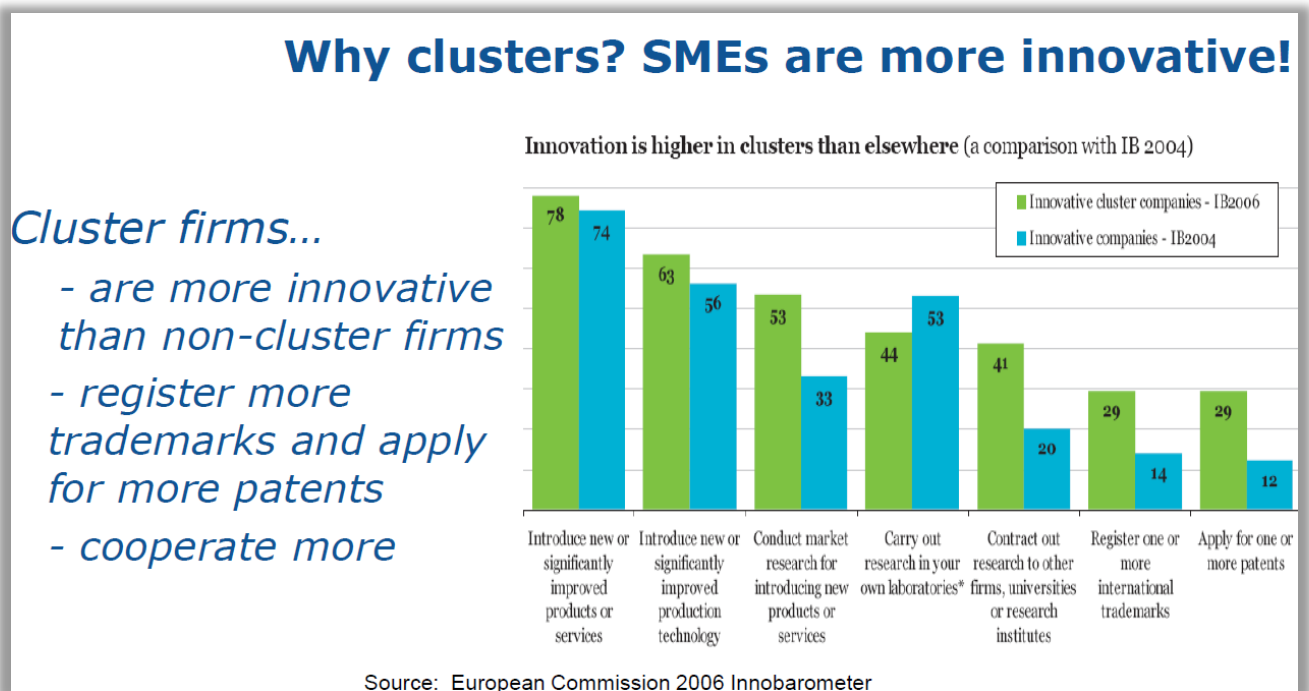


Actualment la majoria dels països més competitius del món disposen de polítiques de suport als clústers, entre d'altres, Singapur, Canadà, Corea del Sud, França, Alemanya, Dinamarca o Noruega.

La principal motivació dels territoris en impulsar polítiques de clúster rau en l'evidència contrastada que hi ha una relació directa entre clústers forts i prosperitat. Per exemple, a Europa s'ha detectat que les empreses dels clústers robustos tenen uns sous un 15% superiors als seus competidors que no formen part de clústers. Aquest és un indicador de major productivitat i alhora un element clau per captar i retenir talent.



Alhora cal destacar la major capacitat d'innovació de les pimes que formen part de clústers actius, tant a nivell de nous productes, com de marques i patents.



Les més de dues dècades d'utilització continuada de la filosofia clúster a Catalunya han permès consolidar un ecosistema clúster, no només de referència internacional sinó amb característiques que el fan únic.

A banda de la continuïtat en la política de clústers esmentada, la presència d'organismes de referència internacional en la

matèria com la xarxa [TCI Network](#) (creada a Catalunya el 1998 i amb la seu al nostre país) o l'[European Foundation for Cluster Excellence](#) (dedicada a la formació dels professionals del clústers) en són dues evidències.

Adicionalment, la història clúster del nostre país ha permès l'especialització d'algunes consultores locals, ara referents globals. Finalment, cal destacar els grans protagonistes dels clústers, les empreses, en concret més de 2.100 que participen activament en els [30 clústers de Catalonia Clusters](#).