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CLUSTERS OF COMPETITIVENESS (КЛАСТЕРИ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ)

A cluster is a system of interconnection between private and public sector entities. It usually comprises a group of companies, suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field, linked by externalities and complementarities. Clusters usually have a specific spatial dimension as well because interlinked firms often concentrate in a specific geographic area.

First proposed by Michael Porter in 1990, cluster development has been embraced by policy makers and academics as a means for stimulating an area's economic development and growth. It has become increasingly important in the context of globalization, which has left many regions and nations struggling to remain competitive.

Governments and private sector entities, acting either as a cluster initiative (CI) organization or through a cluster-based competitiveness project, support links among firms and industries at a regional level to promote an area's growth and competitiveness. Initially associated with developed economies, cluster-based competitiveness projects have since 2000 also been implemented in developing economies.

Public policy, through regional policy as well as policy for science and technology and industry, has implications for cluster development and competitiveness. The optimal form and depth of policy to promote cluster development remain subject to debate. Policy for cluster development at the regional level has focused mostly on lagging regions. Science and technology policies focus mainly on promoting growth efforts among technology companies and on supporting research and development (R&D), while industrial policies strive to promote an area's growth, perhaps by focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The different types of policies are not mutually exclusive; regional, science and technology, and industrial policies may all share the common goal of innovation, which is critical for long-term productivity growth. This research examines the background to cluster development and competitiveness and then goes on to discuss some CIs and cluster-based competitiveness projects. The final section examines the policy implications of CIs.

Clusters increase productivity and efficiency by facilitating efficient access to specialized inputs, services, employees, information, institutions, training programs, and other public goods. The existence of clusters increases the likelihood that opportunities for business will be recognized and also provides an environment in which businesses can come together to share knowledge and/or create knowledge. Clusters help in bringing ideas to market (commercialization) because the opportunity for new products or processes is more apparent in clusters. Spin-off companies and start-ups are encouraged by the presence of other companies and the availability of skills and suppliers, for example.

The success of industrial clusters depends among other things on their capacity to innovate, whether it be the technological innovation that characterizes the information technology (IT) clusters in Silicon Valley and Bangalore or the creative innovation representative of the fashion design clusters in Paris and Mumbai.

The innovative capacity of the company depends very much upon the quality of the links between the innovative orientation and potential of the company and the cluster-specific conditions. The interface between firms in a geographic area is primarily one of competitive rivalry although collaboration can also be important.

Geographical proximity affects competitiveness in three ways:

1. It increases productivity – firms can operate with lower levels of stock because of the local presence of specialized suppliers, and they have access to specialized skills and human resources, aided by specialized and local training providers.

2. It increases the capacity for innovation by facilitating interaction and the dissemination of knowledge – competition between firms raises the incentive to innovate, which in turn raises the capacity to adapt to changes and external shocks.

3. It stimulates and enables new business formation through spin-off enterprises that face lower barriers to entry than in other localities – this in turn creates a positive feedback loop through more competition, innovation, and so on.

The different CIs have different objectives, but each engages in formally organized efforts with the government and the private sector. Examples of objectives include the following: facilitating market development through joint market assessment, marketing, and brand building; encouraging relationship building (networking) within the cluster, within the region, and with clusters in other locations; promoting collaborative innovation – research, product and process development, and commercialization; aiding the innovation diffusion, that is, the adoption of innovative products, processes, and practices; supporting the cluster's expansion through attracting firms to the area and supporting new business development; sponsoring education and training activities; representing cluster interests before external organizations such as regional development partnerships; national trade associations; and local, state, and federal governments.

Furthermore, globalization has changed the way in which firms and markets operate, with greater technological absorption by firms and global integration by markets. Clusters are a means of stimulating economic development at the local, regional, and global level. They play an important role in the modern economy and its search for competitiveness. Clusters arise at many different levels and for many different areas of economic activity. The former analysis focused on the links between firm strategy, structure, and rivalry; input factor conditions; demand conditions; and the presence of related supportive industries. The cluster concept spans the local, regional, national, and international arena, and the chapter looked at these links across geographic space.

A key factor of industrial clusters is innovation.

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ОГЛЯД СТАНУ УПРАВЛІНСЬКОГО КОНСАЛТИНГУ В УКРАЇНІ ТА ЄВРОПІ

Важливість управлінського консалтингу в умовах сучасної ринкової економіки та надзвичайно складного і комплексного середовища, у якому доводиться працювати бізнесам, важко переоцінити. Багатогранність і різноманітність завдань, які регулярно доводиться вирішувати організаціям у процесі свого функціонування, диктують необхідність періодичного залучення консультантів, у якості котрих можуть виступати як індивідуальні особи-спеціалісти, так і консалтингові компанії. Мотивацією для запрошення консультантів може бути цілий ряд причин: зміни у законодавстві, необхідність покращення внутрішніх бізнес-процесів з метою отримання більших прибутків та/або оптимізації роботи, виведення на ринок нового продукту чи послуги тощо.

В Україні функціонують два об'єднання консалтингових організацій. Це асоціація «Укрконсалтинг», що була створена у 1992 році і налічує більше ста консультативних одиниць, і Українська асоціація менеджмент-консультантів.

Обсяг послуг, який надають українські консалтингові організації, досить широкий і розвинений. Зокрема, це управління активами інвестиційних фондів у різних сферах: нерухомість; інвестування в стартапи, цінні папери, облігації, акції; отримання прибутку та інше.

Також деякі з українських консалтингових компаній спеціалізуються на конкретних нішах та галузях господарства. Наприклад, екологічний консалтинг, що займається досить складною тематикою викидів промислових підприємств у навколишнє середовище. Екологічний консалтинг у цьому випадку важливий не лише з точки зору бажання