

## SCOTTISH INNOVATIVE ACTIONS PROGRAMME EU Networking Report

<b>Name of Event</b>	ERIK Study visit to Veneto region and Patterns of cluster evolution conference Venice	<b>Type of Event –</b> <i>seminar, conference, workshop, study visit etc.</i>	Study visit followed by conference
<b>Date of Event</b>	16-19 January 2007	<b>Duration of Event</b>	1.5 days study visit 1.5 days conference
<b>Venue</b>	Veneto Region and Venice	<b>Region / Country</b>	Italy
<b>Description of Event</b>	<p>Study Visit organised by the ERIK network focussing on examples of regional clusters supported in Veneto region incorporating visits to several clusters including The Vega science park, the nano-technology fab, and High fashion Shoe cluster.</p> <p>The conference organised by Veneto Innovazione brought together over 300 people from EU regions to share learning on cluster policy</p>		

<b>Name of Participant</b>	David Robson	<b>Designation of Participant</b>	Dir. Industries Policy and Practice
<b>Company Name</b>	Scottish Enterprise	<b>Telephone Number</b>	0141 228 2453
<b>Address</b>	150 Broomielaw	<b>Email Address</b>	David.robson@scot nt.co.uk
	Atlantic Quay	<b>Fax Number</b>	0141 228 2327
	Glasgow	<b>Other</b>	

**Describe the benefits you and your organisation have gained by attending this event.**

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The event was organised by the ERIK Network. ERIK (European Regions Knowledge based Innovation Network) is formed by 51 regions. The main aim is to sustain and further develop networking and good practice exchange between European regions. <http://www.eriknetwork.net/>

### **The benefits of participation in Study Visit**

Participation has enabled us to benchmark our approach to clusters and Priority Industries against the Veneto region especially. Specifically it has/will allow us to:

- benchmark and learn from dissemination of good practices of innovation and knowledge-based policies;
- take part in inter-regional networking on technological innovation related topics;
- identify organisations and key individuals with whom we can co-operate on European regional networks.

These organisations have similar objectives to us, and yet they have different approaches to the identification and support of clusters (eg the Veneto region with a population comparable to Scotland has identified 43 clusters – they define these as industrial districts). This distinction and experience can be compared to that taken in SE and lessons drawn from the different way we adopt cluster based policies.

In addition it has given us a range of good contacts in organisations similar to SE where we can continue to collaborate and share best practice.

Link to study visit agenda <http://www.eriknetwork.net/studyvisits/veneto/Clusters-StudyVisit-agenda.pdf>

### **The Benefits from participation in Conference**

The conference shared lead practice in cluster policy from several regions in Europe. Again this was a useful opportunity to compare the approach of different regions to the definition and strategy for support of clusters. Specific lessons learned:

- Many regions take a very different view of cluster definition
- Role of 'industrial District's and models of industrial ownership of cluster strategy
- Approaches to address effects of globalisation on clusters – 'knowledge matters more than proximity'
- Concept of 'epistemic' communities – connected by shared language and learning
- Commonality of foresight as essential to cluster vision
- Commonality of 'triple helix' concept of collaboration between industry, academia and government.

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**Describe the benefits the Innovative Actions Programme has gained by your attendance at this event.**

Innovative Actions Programme is all about learning from experimenting how to improve innovation policy and interventions. Participation in the study visit and conference has enabled a comparison with a different approach taken in this region in Italy. It allows a clear comparison with an innovation system that is in many ways very different from Scotland.

**Describe how you have disseminated the learning from the event within your own organisation and to other Programme partners.**

The learning from this study visit and conference will be fed into the policy discussions and work undertaken in SE. The contacts will be considered for further follow-up after reflection regards aspects of best practice learning. This learning will also be reflected in on-going discussions with programme partners.

**Please record details of contacts made at the event.**

**Useful contacts include:**

**Veneto Innovazione** – government supported agency with the aim of promoting and developing applied research and process and product innovation in Veneto

<http://www.venetoinnovazione.it/en/company/catpage.asp?l=1&c=204&i=1>

**Kennisalliantie Z-H** – agency in South Holland supporting enterprise and entrepreneurship

<http://www.kennisalliantie.nl/index.php?id=426>

**LTC - Technical centre of Jönköping county** – aim is to encourage co-operation between industry, education and R&D and the society for a well working regional innovation system.

[http://www.ltc.se/Eng/default\\_eng.htm](http://www.ltc.se/Eng/default_eng.htm)

**BIG Bremen** - Economic Development service-providing body for business and economic development in Bremen

<http://www.big-bremen.de/en/startseite>

**Sideum Innovation AB** – organisation promoting innovation and economic development in Småland med öarna (literally Smaland and Islands) region in South-Eastern Sweden.

<http://www.sideum.se/default.htm>

**MEDICON Valley** - Transnational cluster covering Sweden and Denmark. Interesting example of cross border collaboration

<http://www.scanbalt.org/sw205.asp>

**SPRI** - the business development agency created in 1981 by the Basque Government to provide back-up and services to Basque industry

<http://www.spri.es/aSW/web/eng/index.jsp>



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**Please indicate in what areas these contacts could be of current / future use to the Innovative Actions Programme.**

All above contacts are useful partners in learning in shared practice in innovation support and clusters policy.

**Please list any other relevant/useful information gathered at the event.**

Conference web site: [http://www.ecluster.it/conference/index.html?\\_locale=en](http://www.ecluster.it/conference/index.html?_locale=en)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_