

Article

A Differentiation Framework for Maritime Clusters: Comparisons across Europe

Pedro Monteiro ^{1,*}, Teresa de Noronha ² and Paulo Neto ³

¹ Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics, University of Algarve, and Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Algarve Region, Braciais–Patacão, Faro 8001-904, Portugal

² Faculty of Economics and Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics, University of Algarve, Centro de Investigação sobre o Espaço e as Organizações, Edf. 9 Universidade do Algarve, Campus de Gambelas, Faro 8005-139, Portugal; E-Mail: mtvaz@ualg.pt

³ Economics Department and Center for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics, Department of Economics, University of Évora, Largo dos Colegiais 2, Évora 7000-803, Portugal; E-Mail: neto@uevora.pt

* Author to whom correspondence should be addressed; E-Mail: jpvmonteiro@gmail.com; Tel.: +351-289-870-700; Fax: +351-289-816-003.

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to point out some of the main characteristics and critical factors for success that can substantiate the proposal of a differentiation framework for maritime clusters. We conduct a benchmarking analysis intended to distinguish the most relevant aspects which can or should be observed in these types of clusters, applied to the following countries: Spain (Basque Country), Germany (Lander of Schleswig-Holstein), the Netherlands and Norway. The differentiation factors involve agglomeration economies and endogenous conditions derived from geographic proximity, essential for lowering transaction costs, strengthening the leverage of public/private cooperation through centres of maritime excellence, at the same time providing an adequate local environment that favours positive interactions between the different maritime industries and actors. The main results arising from this article are presented through a reconceptualisation of Porter's Diamond framework for diagnosing the competitiveness of maritime clusters.

Keywords: maritime clusters; innovation; knowledge networking; Porter's Diamond
