Contribution of the Nord-Pas de Calais clusters to the European Commission public consultation on the draft Union Framework for State aid for Research, Development and Innovation

- **Presentation of NFID**

Nord France Innovation Développement (NFID) is the regional innovation agency of the Nord-Pas de Calais region. NFID is appointed by the national administration and the Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais for the implementation and the follow-up of the Regional Innovation Strategy.

NFID is also in charge of the animation of the regional innovation network “J’innove en Nord-Pas de Calais” (www.jinnove.com) which includes “competitiveness clusters” and “clusters of excellence” (Pôles de compétitivité and Pôles d’excellence). This paper therefore presents the views of the 21 clusters from the Nord-Pas de Calais region.

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- **Context**

NFID has been actively involved in the debate on State aid modernization and coordinated the Nord-Pas de Calais competitiveness and innovation clusters’ response to the previous public consultation of the European Commission regarding the Revision of the state aid rules for research and development and innovation¹.

The Nord-Pas de Calais cluster acknowledge that this draft framework is complementary to the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) and therefore decided to contribute as well the public consultation on the new GBER framework.

- **Our position**

The Nord-Pas de Calais clusters welcome in general the draft framework as it offers Member States more possibilities to channel state aid towards boosting innovation, growth and jobs.

In particular, the Nord-Pas de Calais clusters strongly support the European Commission’s proposal stating that R&D projects that are also co-financed by the EU, e.g. under Horizon 2020 or COSME, will now benefit from legal presumptions regarding the necessity and appropriateness of state aid. By clearly stating that EU funding centrally managed by the Commission does not constitute state aid, the Commission sends a strong signal to the Research and Innovation community in general, and clusters in particular, in favour of developing projects that clearly are in the common European interest.