Regionalisation of the innovation policy in Finland: OSKE as an innovation promotion intermediary

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DQE – OSKE 1999 - 2006

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Structure of the presentation

1) Purpose of the presentation
2) Background
3) What was OSKE?
4) The OSKE innovation management concept
5) Lahti OSKE
6) OSKE and innovation intermediaries in the century of RIS3
Purpose of presentation

- To remind & discuss lessons learnt from the Finnish RIS3 pre-amble i.e. the OSKE programme
  (ref: Maria Lindqvist, Lise Smed Olsen, Liisa Perjo och Haukur Claessen, 2013. Implementing the Concept of Smart Specialisation in the Nordic Countries An Exploratory Desk Study NORDREGIO WORKING PAPER 2013:1);

- To explore through the discussion linkages to RIS3 and the BRIDGES project objectives
In Finland, innovation policy has national and regional, and local, dimensions. Innovation is seen as a multi-faceted whole.

The guidelines for Finnish regional innovation policy are laid down in the Government Decision on National & Regional Development.

According to the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, regional innovation policy has mainly been implemented through the Centre of Expertise programme (CoE), TEKES regional strategy and Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment.

During the last years, social, user-based and user-driven innovation has become a more important issue.

RIS3 was introduced at a point when Finland was aware of the risks related to “smart specialisation” and to the importance of not cementing old leading industries but concentrating on identifying new areas. (IQ-Net (2012), [http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/](http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/)).
What was OSKE?

: a specialisation, innovation, and place based agent

OSKE = CENTRES OF EXPERTISE PROGRAMME

• A nation-wide programme introduced in 1994
• The purpose to utilise top level knowledge and expertise as a resource for business operations, job creation and regional development.

An essential in OSKE approach was:

• To provide regions access to top expertise and apply bottom up processes
• Top expertise was recognised in the regions or transferred by players outside
What was OSKE?
- a national integrator of regional potential,
- a strong learning and growth agent

- Shared rules of the game
- Comprehensive approaches
- Multi actor (Partners of the Centres of Expertise at regional level)
What was OSKE?
: a regional specialisation agent

The Centres of Expertise and the fields of expertise in Finland, 1999 - 2006

- A fixed term special programme pooling local, regional, and national resources towards utilising top exercise anywhere in the country.
- Supported regional strengths, and foresaw both specialisation and cooperation between the various centres of expertise.
- Concentrated on internationally competitive fields (global industry and research related trends) and on associated business activities.
The OSKE innovation management concept

Innovation promotion in Finland 1980’s to 2000’s

- From business -to-university generated,
- to the first educated approach in early 1990s,
- to the system approach mediated by Science Parks (= innovation intermediaries) in late 1990s onwards.
Top Expertise: in Design, Quality, Environment

Businesses:
- Industrial clusters; wood, metal, plastics
- Growing sector: environmental technology

Training and Research:
- University units, Polytechnics, Research Institutes
- Technology Centre

Co-ordinated by the Regional Committee
The Science Park as OSKE host and innovation intermediary

Objectives for focusing and selecting projects
- Enhancing the expertise and know how in DQE.
- Utilize the expertise in business development.’

Achievements
- Introducing the role and importance the knowledge and expertise could have in business development.
- Knowledge intensiveness
- Transfer of DQE expertise to business development
- Enhanced network and collaboration / Triple Helix
- Remarkable number of joint projects implemented
Lahti OSKE

The Science Park as OSKE host and innovation intermediary

Impacts

- Science Park’s role in promotion r&d project of companies
- Science Park to lead the multi partner operations in regional development operations
- Companies to move forward in innovation and in utilizing top expertise of R&D
- Progress in some focus areas & clusters

What would /could be done differently

- Longer perspective – better, sustainable results
- More attention to collaboration between players
- More attention to practical results in companies
- More attention on achievement in regional development
- More attention on CoE and Sector Policies (Employment, Industrial, Innovation, Educational and Regional policies)
OSKE and innovation intermediaries in the century of RIS3

OSKE – Success factors
Durable, long term policy commitment of Government
Competitive tendering;
• national status
• state basic funding as catalyst
• Recognizing the regional & local needs and opportunities

National co-ordination and committee’s role
• Focus on world class expertise
• Specialization between regions and increase of critical mass in R&D
• Technology centres/ Science Parks as operational platforms
• Public-private partnership at regional level.
OSKE and innovation intermediaries in the century of RIS3

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