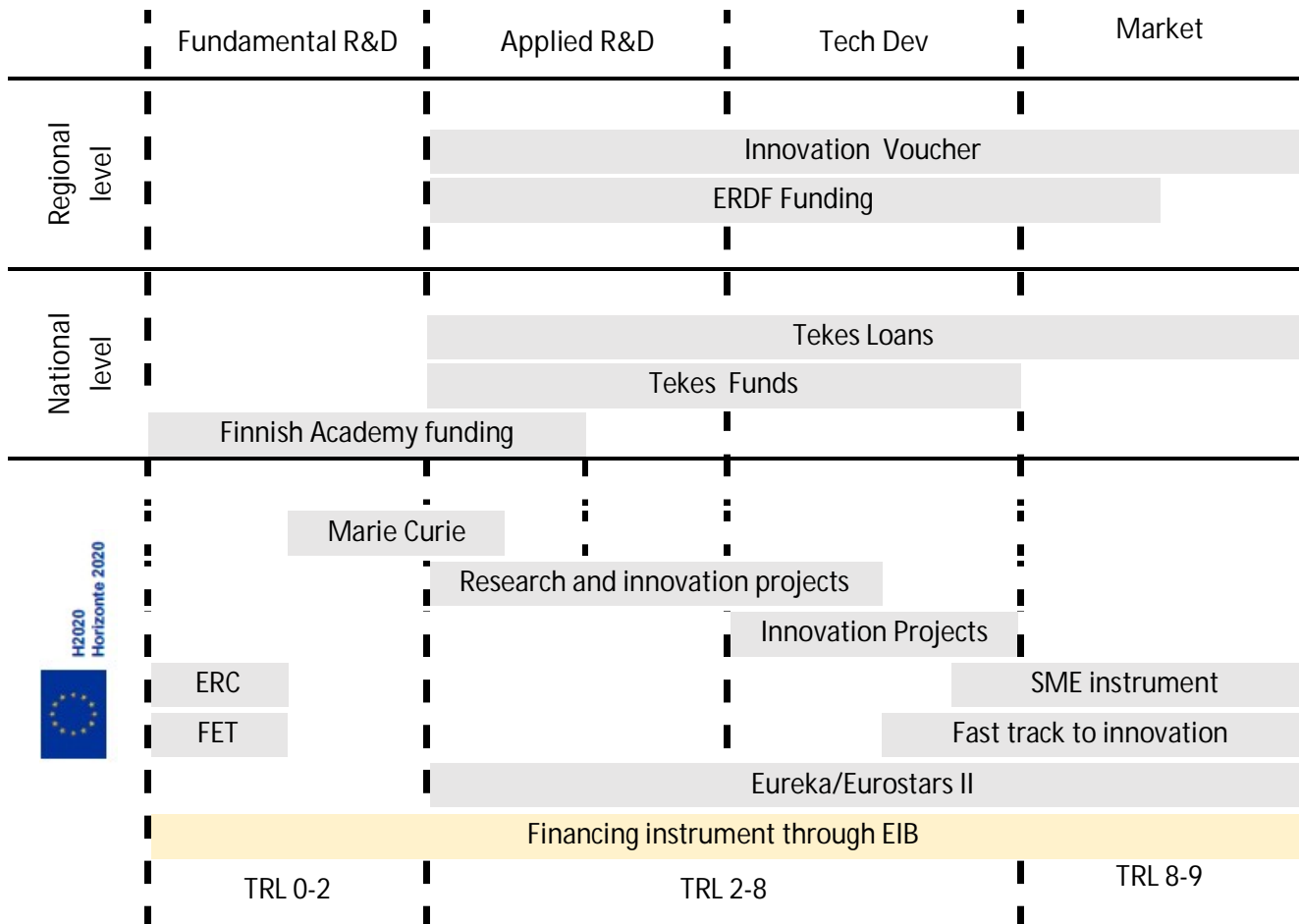


## Policy Brief – Tampere OSDD

### Tampere funding instrument scheme



Tampere OSDD was the first OSDD meeting organized in S34Growth and it represented the first experience to derive policy implications from this type of meetings.

In the meeting a common goal of participating Regions emerged clearly: to establish interregional cooperation to strengthen regional industry and economy.

Besides specific regional processes that somehow differ, there was a strong alignment on the regional priorities of the Specialization Strategy presented by Tampere as well as a common interest in deepening the knowledge on some funding instruments presented in the OSDD and investigate their potential applications in the different regions. In particular, Tampere Region presented its experience with *Innovation Vouchers*, which has been a success and already raised the interest of other regions. The instrument is directed to company in the ERDF program area (Mainland-Finland, or targeted region in Finland), filling the S3 and other requirements. The beneficiaries have freedom to choose the service provider without any pre-selection by authorities,

which is a motivating factor. At the same time service providers can productize their services and the voucher offers them a market-based channel to attract new customers. The related grant is paid directly to the service providers against invoice. In some cases, the service provider has been outside Finland. There is no question about the implementation of Article 70 because the project does not develop products of service providers but offers a channel for marketing them. The Tampere Voucher Scheme.

Based on the presentations, discussions and policy acceleration sessions of the OSDD, as well as on post-elaboration of information performed by Regions after the meeting, the following main critical conclusions can be derived in terms of advantages of cooperation, barriers, and recommendations that can be input for the Action Plan.

### **Advantages and opportunities of inter-regional cooperation deriving from the extension to other regions of the instruments/tools/practices presented**

- Ensure/foster/promote the access of companies to innovation infrastructure of other regions that are necessary to acquire complementary competences and services for the development of regional industry.
- Accelerate the regional uptake of strategic technologies that need specific know-how/competences that are available in other regions.
- Support SMEs in their internationalisation process. To receive direct support from the Regions finalized to establish cooperation with partners and suppliers in other Regions would in fact lower the barriers that SMEs usually face.
- Set up of common inter-regional priorities to promote in future joint or linked regional programmes. This can be done through the definition of a macro-regional strategy, similar to EUSBSR (EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region), addressing the specific Vanguard Initiative goals.
- Identify interregional synergies to be addressed within the INTERREG program.

### **Barriers and difficulties to face for the introduction of new instruments/tools/practices in a coordinated and synergic way**

- The achievement of a critical mass of Regions committed in interregional cooperation is needed to justify the coordinated implementation of new instruments/tools/best practices and to obtain significant results.
- Lack of technical knowledge of Managing Authorities on the specific funding instruments that will be the object of the cooperation (i.e. voucher scheme).
- Need for strong political leadership and commitment for taking the decision to implement interregional cooperation instruments.
- Technical and legal problems related to the regulation and bureaucracy considering the different regional systems.
- In case of joint call, there could be difficulties in coordinating contents and timing due to regional bureaucracy and standards (i.e. quality evaluation).
- Joint open call should not be Vanguard-related in order to comply with the non-discrimination principle of EU Regulation.

- A significant barrier relies in the cultural and political mind-set of Managing Authorities, who need to have a clear understanding on the return of the investment actions in their own Regions. The allocation of own funds to other Regions should be justified by a very clear benefit, especially in Regions where the industrial system is currently suffering, which is difficult to forecast and to prove in advance.

### **Recommendations and suggestions proposed to overcome such barriers and difficulties**

- Support the cultural change of Managing Authorities in order to open their mind-set towards cooperation, especially if these kind of actions allow higher returns and more structural industrial strategic competitiveness in the medium-long term if compared to traditional regional investments.
- Develop case histories, success stories and other tools supporting the objective measurement of benefits for assisting Managing Authorities in the decisions of interregional cooperation.
- Overcome the lack of knowledge on technical aspects by learning from Regions that are applying the envisaged instrument.
- Always comply with smart specialization strategy when designing cooperative actions. In particular, Vanguard Pilots and demo-cases can serve as test-cases to address the development and implementation of interregional policy instruments. They can help to link S34Growth project developments with relevant priorities that were recently identified with the Vanguard methodology.
- Continue the exploitation of existing opportunity in the INTERREG programme, also considering the joint priorities and interests emerging from the S34Growth project.
- Explore opportunities of the ERANET program, as well as of other instruments at European level (CSAs, H2020 Calls, Eurostars, etc.).
- Design new interregional cooperation instruments that are complementary to what is already existing (i.e. ERDF, ESF, Interreg, Horizon 2020, Tekes, PPP models).
- Refer to Vanguard demo-cases in order to link interregional programs' objectives with high-relevance ongoing activities that were defined according to smart specialization.