



ACTION PLAN

Part I – General information

Project: HIGHER

Partner organisation: CEiiA

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):

Country: Portugal

NUTS2 region: North

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

Norte 2020 – Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer – Collective Actions

The targeted policy instrument is Norte 2020 (Regional Operational Program of the North Region, Portugal) - Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer - Collective Actions. This instrument is included in Thematic Objective 1 – Promotion of research, technological development and innovation (total ERDF - 403 M €) - Priority 1.2 – Promotion of business R&D investment, and development of synergies between companies, research centres and universities. It aims to promote business R&D investment, enhancing the cooperation between companies and regional Science and Technology organizations, and stimulating knowledge intensive activities and value creation based on innovation (priority 1.2.1). Thus, promoting science – industry collaboration is the main objective of this measure, which is supporting projects under public-private partnerships: companies, universities, R&D centres, associations, and public bodies. A collective approach is privileged. Consequently, the projects should be oriented to answer to common risks and opportunities of an enlarged group of companies, promoting positive externalities, especially under the challenges established by the RIS3.

In fact, RIS3 Norte aims to promote competitiveness, innovation capacity and internationalization of the region. Its main ambitions are to increase R&D investment, namely business R&D investment, and to promote partnerships between companies, universities, and R&D centres. Eight strategic areas were selected: sea-related economic activities; human capital and specialized services; culture, design and fashion; mobility industries and environment; food and agriculture environmental systems; life and health sciences; symbolic capital, technology and tourism services; and key enabling technologies. The policy instrument tackled under the scope of HIGHER project should be focused on these strategic areas, according to the projects' selection criteria.

Two calls for proposals were launched, with an ERDF amount of 10 M each (one in 2015 and other in 2016) (funding rate is 85%). In the 1st call, 14 projects were approved with an ERDF amount of 8,391 M €. In the 2nd call, 16 projects were approved with an ERDF funding of 7,170 M €. An additional call was launched in 2015 targeted to a specific group of beneficiaries. 3 projects were approved with an ERDF amount of 2 M €. Thus, in total, 33 projects were approved with an ERDF funding of 17,562 M €.

Policy Instrument	Calls 2015	Calls 2016	Calls 2017	Approved Projects
Collective actions – Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer	17	16	-	33

The projects were mainly proposed by universities, polytechnic institutes and technology centres, being the operations centred in some of the strategic areas of RIS3, namely food and agriculture environment systems, health sciences, and information and communication technologies.

At the moment, no information is available concerning future calls for proposals. According to the Managing Authority, a reprogramming process of Norte2020 is being carried out, and only after its conclusion it will be possible to have access to the calendar of future calls for proposals.

However, the ‘Collective Actions’ policy instrument includes not only the measure “Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer” but also other measures related with science-industry interaction, technology transfer and innovation. Thus, we have considered all the measures associated to ‘Collective Actions’ to improve our capacity to influence the PI, comprising:

- Collective Actions – Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer;
- Collective Actions – Promoting entrepreneurship;
- Collective Actions – Internationalisation;
- Collective Actions – Qualification.

The status of the related calls for proposals and approved projects is described in the following table:

Policy Instrument	Calls 2015	Calls 2016	Calls 2017	Approved Projects
Collective actions – Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer	17	16	-	33
Collective actions - Entrepreneurship	39	12	-	51
Collective actions - Internationalization	29	12	3	44
Collective actions - Qualification	33	30	-	63
Total				191

According to information provided by the Managing Authority, some future calls for proposals linked to this PI (‘Collective Actions’) will probably be targeted to specific beneficiaries, namely Technological Interface Centres. The objective of these organizations is to promote the interface between universities and companies, through product valorisation and technology transfer activities. 40 Technological Interface Centres (TIC) have

been officially recognized by the Portuguese Government. It is worth of notice that CEiiA, a partner of HIGHER project was acknowledged as a 'Technological Interface Centre'.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1 - Establishment of a Monitoring System for the Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3) of the North Region

1. The background

One of the fragilities identified in the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the North Region was the lack of a structured monitoring system. This weakness has been recognized by the Managing Authority (through two meetings and exchange of several e-mails between CEiiA and CCDR-N) and by regional stakeholders during the implementation of Phase 1 of the HIGHER project. Moreover, the learning process and the exchange of experiences with the other project partners was very useful to identify good practices related with monitoring processes.

One reference example is RIS3CAT (Catalonia RIS3) Monitoring System, available in the “Good Practices Inventory” of the HIGHER project, and presented to the partnership by UAB Research Park (Lead Partner) in some project’s events.

The Catalan RIS3 Monitoring System was developed and implemented with the aim of monitoring and coordinate the ERDF with a learning process of the quadruple helix dynamics and the economic transformation of Catalonia.

The main objectives of this monitoring system are to guide the design, implementation and evaluation of RIS3CAT in order to ensure the efficient use of public resources and maximize their impact, and to provide information to facilitate the decision-making of the stakeholders concerned so that they can adapt strategies, instruments and projects.

The RIS3CAT monitoring process is structured in four levels: projects, instruments, process of intelligent specialization, and impact. The main sources of information for the monitoring system are related to different indicators:

- RIS3CAT project execution indicators (carried out by companies, R&D+I system stakeholders, public administration and non-profit organizations);
- RIS3CAT outcome indicators;
- Comparison indicators in the context of the European Union.

In addition to the quantitative information obtained through the indicator system, qualitative information is collected through questionnaires and other tools.

The monitoring system is fundamental to the governance of RIS3CAT, allowing adjustments of the strategy to the real needs, challenges and opportunities that are emerging in the Catalan economy. A public report is published annually with all the information collected during the period, where a specific analysis of the main results obtained is carried out. The Action Plan of the strategy is updated annually by the RIS3CAT bodies based, mainly, on the information obtained through the monitoring system.

The lack of a monitoring system of RIS3 influences the capacity to monitor and evaluate the results of the PI tackled by CEiiA in the scope of the HIGHER project - 'Collective Actions'.

2. Action

The development of a monitoring system of the implementation of any Smart Specialisation Strategy is essential for its success. It is through an effective monitoring system that one can evaluate the implementation of these strategies to support the decision-making process and to make possible adjustments to the objectives, strategic areas and policy instruments.

An effective monitoring system of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Northern Region of Portugal is not in place. It is necessary to define a set of indicators that will be used in the monitoring process, making data and information available concerning the implementation of the strategy.

Thus, one of the actions proposed in this Action Plan, to be developed under the HIGHER project (Phase 2) is the establishment of a monitoring system for the RIS3 Norte, which could be extended to the Transborder Smart Specialisation Strategy Northern Portugal – Galicia, Spain.

The definition of a monitoring system for RIS3 Norte will not only benefit the strategy itself, but will also allow the monitoring of the policy instrument tackled by CEiiA within the HIGHER project: North 2020 - Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer - Collective Actions.

In a meeting between CEiiA and CCDR-N, the RIS3 team made reference to other INTERREG Europe project linked to monitoring systems – MONITORIS3 ("Exchange of experiences in monitoring mechanisms, indicators and methodologies addressed to improvement in the delivery of policies and instruments in the framework of Regional RIS3 across regions"). The Galicia Innovation Agency is the Lead Partner, and CCDR-N participates in the consortium as partner (as well as ANI – National Innovation Agency). Thus, it will be useful to join efforts between the two projects in order to structure a monitoring system for RIS3 Norte.

It is worth of notice that this monitoring system must be designed in coherence with the guidelines defined in the scope of the National Smart Specialisation Strategy, coordinated by ANI – National Innovation Agency. This multilevel governance model calls for an articulation between the national and the regional level.

Some activities will be developed to achieve this objective:

Meetings with the Managing Authority (CCDR-N):

Since CCDR-N is the Managing Authority of Norte 2020 and is directly responsible for the policy instrument with which CEiiA is working, the objective of this activity is the organisation of joint meetings to update, monitor and evaluate project's action plan implementation and its results.

Meetings with regional stakeholders:

The regional stakeholders of the HIGHER project played an important role in the implementation of the project during the first phase. During the second phase, this group will support the monitoring and evaluation of the results of the action plan implementation, and therefore some meetings are still required at this stage.

Additional benchmarking exercises in the framework of HIGHER and MONITORIS3 projects:

The first phase of the HIGHER project was mainly focused on learning, exchange of experiences, sharing of knowledge and good practices among the various partners, through meetings, workshops, study visits and benchmarking analysis.

Since CCDR-N (Managing Authority) and ANI (National Innovation Agency) are partners of the referred MONITORIS3 project, which is still in the first phase, additional benchmarking exercises will be developed in order to collect more details about monitoring systems and consolidate the actions to be implemented during phase 2.

Definition of guidelines related to monitoring indicators and system:

Based on the results of the learning phase of the HIGHER project and on additional benchmarking exercises, this activity is related to the definition of guidelines for the selection of monitoring indicators, which will support the decision-making process, as well as for the requisites of the monitoring system.

3. Players involved

- CEiiA – Partner of the HIGHER project;
- Regional Development and Coordination Commission of the North Region (CCDR-N) – Managing Authority;
- Regional Stakeholders.

4. Timeframe

October 2018 – September 2020

5. Costs

CEiiA's internal resources (namely staff costs): 10.000 € (estimation)

6. Funding sources

Not applicable

ACTION 2 - Activation of a Regional Innovation Council for Monitoring RIS3 Norte and the implementation of related PI

1. The background

Other fragility identified in the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Northern Region is the inexistence of a formal Regional Innovation Council oriented to monitor its execution and evaluate its impact on the promotion of science - industry collaboration within the RIS3 strategic areas.

The Regional Scientific Council for Research and Innovation, one of the good practices identified during the exchange of experiences phase of the HIGHER project, is a good example that can be replicated and adjusted to the reality of the Northern region. This good practice was presented by the Region of Central Macedonia (Greece) in some project's events and is available in the "Good Practices Inventory" of the HIGHER project.

The mission of the Regional Scientific Council for Research and Innovation is to support the planning and implementation of the RIS3 strategy and related regional Action Plan. The Council supports the implementation of RIS3 through different proposals and suggestions, based on analytical tools such as expert opinions, field studies, innovation assessments and human resources collaboration.

This support includes:

- a) Networking of the regional stakeholders involved in R&D+I;
- b) Cooperation with the R&T National General Secretariat for planning and implementing R&D+I regional strategies coordinated in the national level;
- c) Defining criteria and conditions for the evaluation of R&I proposals submitted to regional authorities;
- d) Enhancing the access of beneficiaries to various funding sources, as well as the integration and interconnection of research organizations;
- e) Making full use of the research potential of the region and its human resources, enhancing the R&I infrastructures and facilitating the transfer of knowledge.

The Council consists of eleven members, six of whom are from the university or research institutes, and the remaining five are from the market and other institutions and public administration, covering a large part of the four-fold propeller of the innovation ecosystem.

2. Action

Based on the governance model of the Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3), the creation of a Regional Innovation Council aims to monitor and evaluate these strategies. Thus, in the North Region, and in accordance with the recommendations of the European Commission, the establishment of a Regional Innovation Council has been approved. This new body should advise and propose lines of action to the Managing Authorities of the European programs, namely NORTE 2020.

So far, this Regional Innovation Council of the North is not active. This is also a constrain to the effective implementation of a monitoring system of the Smart Specialisation Strategy. In the scope of this Action Plan, a second action is related to the activation of this body.

The activation of the Regional Council of Innovation of the North region, besides promoting the governance model of RIS3 and its monitoring, will also promote the monitoring of the political instrument with which CEiiA, partner of the HIGHER project is working (North 2020 - Scientific and Technological Knowledge Transfer - Collective Actions).

For the accomplishment of this action, some activities were defined, such as:

Meetings with the Managing Authority (CCDR-N):

Since CCDR-N is the Managing Authority and is directly responsible for the policy instrument with which CEiiA is working, joint meetings will be organised in order to monitor and evaluate project's action plan implementation and its results.

Meetings with regional stakeholders:

The regional stakeholders of the HIGHER project played an important role in the first phase of the project. This group will support the development of the action plan, the monitoring and evaluation of the project results, and therefore frequent meetings are still required at this stage.

3. Players involved

- CEiiA – Partner of the HIGHER project;
- Regional Development and Coordination Commission of the North Region (CCDR-N) – Managing Authority;
- Regional Stakeholders.

4. Timeframe

October 2018 – September 2020

5. Costs

CEiiA's internal resources (namely staff costs): 1.000 € (estimation)

6. Funding sources:

Not applicable

ACTION 3 – Launch of Regional Smart Specialisation Platforms related to RIS3 Strategic Areas

7. The background

Under the framework of the Regional Innovation Council, it is foreseen the launch of Regional Smart Specialisation Platforms in the areas defined in the scope of RIS3.

During the learning process of the first phase of the HIGHER project, in particular in the partners' meetings and thematic workshops, some good practices were presented that can be inspirational for the creation of these platforms in the North Region. One of these good practices, presented by the Association of Urban Municipalities of Slovenia, was the Strategic Research and Innovation Partnerships (SRIPs) programme.

This good practice was presented to the project partners during the Interregional Meeting in Cambridge ("Governance and internationalization of S4 and Strategic Research and Innovation Partnerships in Slovenia" – March 2017) and is also available in the "Good Practice Inventory" of the HIGHER project.

The Slovenian Smart Specialization Strategy (S4) is being implemented around the establishment of Strategic Research and Innovation Partnerships (SRIPs), one for each of the nine priority areas of the strategy (Smart Cities and Communities; Smart Buildings and Homes, including wood chain; Networks for the transition into a Circular Economy; Sustainable food production; Sustainable tourism; Factories of the future; Health – medicine; Mobility; Development of materials as products).

Each partnership includes representatives of companies, knowledge institutions and government actors and aims to improve the overall performance of companies and institutions in areas where Slovenia has recognized comparative and competitive advantages as well as develop and market new products and innovative services in the areas defined in S4 and, consequently, the creation of jobs with higher added value.

Each of the SRIPs connects more than 100 companies and knowledge institutions and is developing roadmaps or action plans in which they define the development strategy of the corresponding strategic area. They are also developing interesting projects and strategies for internationalization, and are considered a good tool for integration into international value chains.

Another good practice presented by UAB Research Park (Lead Partner) during the Interregional Meeting in Cambridge (March 2017), which is also available in the “Good Practices Inventory” of the HIGHER project concerns the RIS3CAT Communities. RIS3CAT Communities are one of the main instruments for implementing RIS3 in Catalonia and an innovative element as it combines the need to implement RIS3 and the development of the EDP (Entrepreneurial Discovery Process) in order to achieve the transformation of the economic sectors of Catalonia.

They are groups of companies, business associations, cluster organisations, universities, research centres, technology centres, foundations and institutions linked to R&I, whose main objective is to define a high impact action plan to be implemented through the development of several R&D collaborative projects. The action plans of these communities are financed through the Government of Catalonia, European funds (ERDF) and other public and private funds.

There are 11 communities in five different strategic economic sectors: health; agri-food; industrial systems; chemistry and resources; and sustainable mobility.

8. Action

The third action proposed in this AP is the creation and activation of Regional Smart Specialisation Platforms in the areas defined in the scope of RIS3 to support the implementation of the strategy: sea-related economic activities; human capital and specialized services; culture, design and fashion; mobility industries and environment; food and agriculture environmental systems; life and health sciences; symbolic capital, technology and tourism services; key enabling technologies. These platforms will integrate several players, namely companies, entrepreneurs, universities, research centres, associations, and public bodies.

These platforms will be a good instrument to involve all the regional stakeholders related to each strategic area of RIS3 in planning and monitoring the implementation of the strategy and related PI. Since CEiiA is an important regional player on mobility industries, it can directly contribute to the activation of the Mobility Platform.

In this framework, it is important not only the articulation with the national level of the Smart Specialisation Strategy, but also with some networks and other types of agglomerations that are being supported by the Portuguese Government, such as clusters and collaborative laboratories (some of them with regional

relevance). CEiiA is well positioned to contribute to this analysis, since it is member of three clusters: Smart Cities, Automotive, and Aeronautics; and three Collaborative Laboratories: sea and space, industry 4.0, and smart and sustainable cities.

For the accomplishment of this action some activities were identified, such as:

Meetings with the Managing Authority (CCDR-N):

Since CCDR-N is the Managing Authority and is directly responsible for the policy instrument with which CEiiA is working, joint meetings will be organised in order to monitor and evaluate project's action plan implementation and its results.

Meetings with regional Stakeholders:

The regional stakeholders of the HIGHER project played an important role in the first phase of the project. This group will support the development of the action plan, the monitoring and evaluation of the project results, and therefore frequent meetings are still required at this stage.

Study and analysis of the articulation between clusters and collaborative laboratories with regional relevance in the framework of RIS3 and Regional Smart Specialisation Platforms:

Due to the several types of cooperative arrangements existent in Portugal to promote the interface between the research community and the business community, it will be necessary to identify their contribution to the Regional Smart Specialisation Platforms. This is the case of clusters and collaborative laboratories.

Since CEiiA is a member of three clusters (smart cities, automotive, and aeronautics) and three collaborative laboratories (sea and space, industry 4.0, and smart and sustainable cities), it is in a privileged position to make this analysis.

Participation in the meetings of the Regional Smart Specialisation Platform oriented to mobility industries:

Since CEiiA is focused on the development of the mobility industries, it will participate in the meetings of the Regional Smart Specialisation Platform centred on mobility, supporting the definition of its working methodology, roadmap of activities and monitoring processes.

9. Players involved

- CEiiA – Partner of the HIGHER project;
- Regional Development and Coordination Commission of the North Region (CCDR-N) – Managing Authority;
- Regional Stakeholders.

10. Timeframe

October 2018 – September 2020

11. Costs

CEiA's internal resources (namely staff costs): 8.000 € (estimation)

12. Funding sources

Not applicable

Date: 11 September 2018

Signature:

Stamp of the organisation (if available):