ACTION PLAN

Catalonia

With the support of:

HIGHER
Interreg Europe

RIS3CAT

INNOÀPAT

Index

General information

Project: HIGHER

Partner organisation: PARC DE RECERCA UAB (PRUAB)

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):_____

Country: SPAIN

NUTS2 region: CATALONIA

Contact person:_____

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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: Comunitats RIS3CAT (RIS3CAT Communities in the ERDF ROP Catalunya 2014-2020)

RIS3CAT Communities are an essential and innovative element when combining both the necessity of the RIS3 implementation and the development of the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP). In order to achieve a real transformation of the economic sectors in Catalonia in terms of RIS3 and EDP, it is necessary to join efforts from many different stakeholders, usually with very different perspectives (and in the end they also become beneficiaries of the instrument): companies, business associations, cluster organisations, universities, research centres, technology centres, foundations and institutions linked to R&I, or the public as users, consumers and citizens.

The Communities allow the alignment of those stakeholders and different interests through a bottom-up approach and a 2 stage competitive process:

- Grouping the stakeholders in associations with a minimum of 8 different members with a common economic sector or technological sphere and the obligation of launching cooperation projects under the excellence principle.
- Establishing common agendas for the R&I, public sector and production systems in those economic sectors with an operating Community, aligning resources and policies.
- Promoting mid and long-term R&I common programmes based on the feedback and results of the projects launched, integrating visions from different agents, with especial attention to the SMEs as innovation agents.

In order to form a RIS3CAT community, at least eight members are required, including stakeholders from the private sector and R&I system. RISCAT3 Communities stakeholders include: companies, business associations, cluster organisations, universities, research centres, technology centres, foundations and institutions linked to R&I, associations and other organisations that are users of technology. It is essential for stakeholders to have an operational base in Catalonia.

The RIS3CAT Communities is implemented by ACCIÓ Agency (part of the Catalan Government devoted to competitiveness and R&D and innovation) with a total investment amount of 54M euros of ERDF funding and at least 10 people involved in different roles of analysis, support and evaluation for the Communities. Each Community has its own coordination team.

The associations are powerful but complex structures and governance is key for the successful development of the Communities and their projects. The coordination for the implementation of the projects of very different kinds of partners is critical and difficult, especially regarding the involvement of the civil society as the 4 Helix approach advocates to. That is a key aspect that should be improved and further developed into the governance structure of the Communities. The implication of the civil society is envisaged as an opportunity to improve the instrument and to align it with the new developments in the RIS3CAT implementation.

Furthermore, connected to the (scarce) presence of the civil society as stated before, the focus of the Communities on areas of growing potential and importance such as the '*social innovation*' field has also been weak. There is ample room for improving the performance of the instrument in promoting social innovation initiatives within their specialization field.

The main results of the instrument are positive but the RIS3CAT strategy is realigning itself towards the 4H and mission-oriented concepts and all the instruments that are part of it would greatly benefit from adjusting themselves in that direction.

Details of the actions

ACTION 1: "INNOVATION CAMP INITIATIVE": INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATION PROCESSES IN A 4-HELIX ORIENTED *COMUNITATS RIS3CAT*

1. **The background**

The implementation of the RIS3 through different instruments evolves tightly and mostly around the interactions amongst Public Administration, Enterprises (already existent or in an "entrepreneurship development") and the R+D+I system. Some of the partners (although one of them have already left the project) in the project and the instruments in their regions are using a more encompassing approach and working with different agents, including social organisations in the territory, such is the case of Greater Cambridge - Greater Peterborough in the UK or Regiao Norte in Portugal. Nevertheless, there is not a systematic approach for such kind of linking between final users/general public and the rest of the RIS3 agents when implementing the strategy through different kind of instruments.

As shown in the workshops held in Stockholm (10/11/2016), Thessaloniki (4/10/2017) and Stockholm again (21/02/2018), most of the instruments analysed (both in all the partner's regions as well as other ones also benchmarked as part of the learning activities devised in the application form of the project) rely on knitting tightly the R&I system, public administrations and companies, especially SMEs. They have been successful in different degrees but there is a common trait for all of them, which is the development of solid platforms for triple-helix (3H) projects but without a systematic presence of the citizenship/general public in those territories. The instruments are mainly focused in enhancing the collaboration and transference of R&D through innovation in and for the companies in a very classic 3H formulation.

Some of the most successful examples of that kind of 3H approaches are located in the Stockholm Region (Sweden), inside the "*Stockholm Model for smart specialisation*", with initiatives such as the innovation platform '*Innovation Stockholm'*, the *STING model* or the *Urban ICT Arena*. All those mechanisms are clear examples of how to develop a successful collaboration platform where academia, companies and public-private partnerships can cooperate in innovative solutions for what they call *social challenges*. They enhance the reach of those partnerships with the potential to explore the innovations and ideas on the field, using for that aim parts of Stockholm as testing areas and, to some extent, the direct involvement of the general public and citizenship.

Those examples can serve as references for the involvement of different kinds of agents and stakeholders to develop, for instance, social innovation projects. Nevertheless, the participation as from the general public is not formally established, so there is a great potential for a growing participation of that general public still to be exploited inside those initiatives. The STING model allows the participation of the citizenship through the start-up development process it applies in its incubation and acceleration processes. The start-ups are encouraged to use fast-prototyping as well as other methods where interaction with the market and general public are a basic tool for the growth and development of the companies. Although the participation is mediated by the enterprise part of the 3H model, it enriches the projects as well as the very model. There are different meeting-points such as workshops, working lunch-or-breakfasts, etc., where different stakeholders can take part in the innovation process channelled through the model.

The URBAN ICT Arena encourages the participation of the general public through its focus in co-creation and testing-on-the-ground (testbed) principles. It is very focused on the IC Technologies and the digitisation processes in urban environments, but it shows that it is possible an active involvement of non-specialized stakeholders in innovation processes. Specifically, the testbed part means that the citizens and different areas of Stockholm are part of the innovation and development process, acting as early-adopters and testing grounds for the technologies and solutions proposed. It shows that people are willing to participate with an active role (not just passive as consumers) in innovation processes, specially those affecting their physical or social environment.

The Innovation Stockholm platform encourages the interaction with the general public in terms of the definition of relevant challenges and needs to be addressed through different open calls.

Nevertheless, here the participation is mediated by different stakeholder's partnerships (public/private and from the innovation ecosystem) and its links to the citizenship (mainly through political agendas and market research tools).

All those initiatives give a glimpse of how that kind of participation from the general public could be oriented in the context of the smart specialization, but they do not have fully developed means or tools to have that participation of the civil society as an integral part, by design, of the instrument. They signal the path but the instruments are not yet fully committed to develop it from a "formal" point of view. They rely on the willingness and capacity of the different agents, or the very characteristics of each project to facilitate or encourage that kind of participation. Nevertheless, they still lack that participation as part of the design and implementation cycle of the instruments.

The main lesson is that participation is viable in a very innovative environment and people are willing to be part of it, but in this case it has not been formally included as part of the instrument. There is room for improvement in any instrument of smart specialization that eases the involvement of the general public in its strategic formulation as well as its effective implementation afterwards through projects.

Other good examples can be found in Greater Cambridge - Greater Peterborough (UK) such as the *initiative of supporting RIS3 collaborative and contract research and development initiative* or the *KEEP+ Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Project* from the Anglia Ruskin University. Those are platforms of collaboration for different kinds of stakeholders with a successful record in developing innovation oriented projects, but highly focused on a 3H approach with scarce presence of the general public or a more social-challenges oriented focus. They have sophisticated ICT tools in order to facilitate collaboration and cooperation amongst different stakeholders and that could be expanded to include other stakeholders such as the general public.

On the other hand, there is a steady work with start-ups and a growing entrepreneurship culture that, with an increasing focus in social challenges and social innovation in the former partner's region, such focus and some of the tools used can be transferred to existing policy instruments such as Communities in Catalonia. Those platforms use different electronic tools (interactive forums, workflow and interactive agendas and planners, etc.) as well as physical meeting points and events (face-to-face) that allow a continuous flow of exchanges and interaction amongst the different stakeholders that the Communities could replicate inside each of them and the instrument as a whole.

As indicated, the tools could also be enhanced and opened to facilitate the interaction with the civil society and social stakeholders as part of a wider 4H. That possibility has not been used in the (former) partner's instrument, although it is hinted in the approach they use for enhancing participation of entrepreneurs and the importance of innovation through detection of (social) needs unfulfilled in the market. Through social media and different electronic-participation means the start-ups and the different stakeholders can exchange opinions, ideas and create a continuous feedback loop, sometimes about a product, service or solution, sometimes about a whole innovative process or even the development of the company as such.

The main lesson is that there are technologies already used in supporting the start-up and innovation ecosystem that allow continuous feedback and a richer participation and involvement in different kinds of projects: from developing a product to a whole new innovative solution. That kind of approach could be used in the Communities instrument, applying some of those tools (such as the electronic platforms used for communication and collaboration that could inspire similar solutions for the Communities) and a methodology better prepared to ensure the full participation of the civil society in defining new challenges and needs for the R+D+i ecosystem.

In the case of the *Euroregional Innovation Strategy* developed in Regiao Norte – Galicia, there is a deep involvement of different stakeholders in the definition of challenges (in the territory, in many different dimensions) and strategies for tackling them but, again, with a very scarce presence of the general public versus a more "classic approach" based on the main stakeholders of the 3H model. The cross-border dimension is very important and opens the possibility of combining different perspectives from the civil society point of view. Nevertheless, such a role is highly concentrated in the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process used in the definition of the strategy.

The EDP has included different meetings and workshops as well as on-line participation tools where representatives of the civil society and the general public can give feedback and effectively participate in the definition of the strategy and its main objectives. Even in a complex context such as

participating in a cross-border initiative, the civil society in both sides of the border have achieved an active role in the EDP process and the shaping of the strategy.

Nevertheless, once the strategy is put into action through different instruments, the focus changes to a more classic (and effective in that context) 3H model for the cooperation of the R+D+I ecosystem with different companies (especially SMEs) in innovation projects, without the direct implication of the civil society. Nevertheless the first stage of the strategy and the implication of the general public in the definition of territorial challenges show that it is possible to count on the civil society for such tasks.

This is a clear inspiration to adapt such participation in later stages, not just in the strategy definition but in the definition of the innovation projects as well. Communities could greatly benefit from such an implication and collaboration in defining specific social challenges to tackle through innovation and the projects developed inside each Community. It is necessary, though, to find the best methodology in order to ensure an effective and efficient participation in such an environment as the Communities.

Aligned with that kind of thoughts, just as spearhead of different works of the European Commission in that direction for this and future programming periods, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the EC is promoting a new approach to the RIS3 implementation through a higher participation of the 4-Helix (4H) agents, using the 'innovation camp' methodology and the so called *holistic innovation policy* approach. In fact this new approach is being worked with different Managing Authorities and partners in Interreg Europe projects in order to collect different good practices as well as spreading that new approach when working with different policy instruments related to the RIS3.

This new RIS3 re-formulation and implementation increasingly demands such a new approach where the 4H model is fully implemented and so the main stakeholders involved in its implementation (EC and JRC, Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies, etc.) are actively working in reshaping the instruments to accommodate this new vision. In meetings held in Barcelona (11/01/2017) and Seville (17/01/2018), MAs and JRC have emphasized the necessity of bringing together the '3H' main components of the instruments currently used with the last component of the 4H: *the civil society*. In order to achieve such a participation and growing involvement, they have so launched different proposals and methodologies, from the peer-review, exchange and learning (PXL) processes to specific tools such as the *innovation camps.*

Those are considered the necessary next steps in reshaping and adjusting the RIS3 for the rest of the programming period (and also its instruments) as well as the next one. They are in line with the concepts of 'systemic innovation' and Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) which are the key components of the RIS3 and its instruments in its valid definition in the present programming period.

This has also been confirmed in the exchange and mutual learning process launched by HIGHER's partners with other Interreg Europe projects as well as with different stakeholders in their respective regions as part of an effort for cross-learning and collaborating with other partnerships, in line with instruments and initiatives such as the Policy Learning Platform of the Programme.

Derived from the exploratory and benchmarking process as well as the analysis of the different practices and instruments, one very important lesson learned in Phase 1 is that any if none at all of the RIS3 instruments analysed in the project (in the partners' regions as well as other ones in the EU as part of the activities included in the project design, to a total amount of 26 regions) has a proper approach or tool to include such social agents or the 4H approach as the RIS3 is demanding nowadays. There are examples of social innovation or an increasing presence of social challenges as part of the smart specialisation and innovation projects, but there is not a clear example of such devices using a 4H approach in an integrated form.

It is possible to bring those agents closer through different tools, especially the methodology that JRC is working on. The Communities instrument in Catalonia could greatly benefit from such a linking tool and it could use the works developed in the InterregEurope framework to move forward along this path. It is critical to bridge the gap between the actual implementation of the instrument at the moment and the foreseen approach the EC wants to be included in the RIS3 as well as its instruments in the regional level.

In summary, the learning process has shown that it is possible and desirable that the general public / citizenship participates actively in innovation processes such as the common ones in the RIS3. They

already participate as early-adopters or testers and giving feedback in those processes. They can help defining the relevant challenges those innovation processes in the RIS3 should address as well as the best strategies and priorities to be applied (even in a complex cross-border context). There are tools (mainly ICT-based) that help co-ordinate and add up all those efforts into a coherent process. Nevertheless, all those elements are scattered amongst different instruments (and regions), just lacking its integration and application in one single process and instrument of the RIS3.

Finally, there is a methodology being tested (and fairly promoted) by the EC that could be used as a mean for implementing an integrated approach for that kind of participation, improving the deployment and results of the existing Communities instrument. General public could participate in defining challenges, the definition and development of the corresponding solutions and its final implementation in the framework of a RIS3 instrument. The aim of the action is testing and deploying such an approach, putting together all the different pieces and elements gathered in the learning process of Phase 1.

2. Action to be implemented

The Action is oriented to increasing the presence of social challenges and social innovation in the Communities policy instrument through the use of the 4H model in the RIS3 design and implementation, as presented by the JRC. The Catalan Managing Authority is already working in that direction with an innovative initiative: the *CATLABS* network. This is a network of '*labs*' (*living and* social) where civil society, public administrations, R&I operators (Universities, innovation centres, etc.) and companies can meet and work on social challenges, from a very local to a more regional level.

The aim of the Action is to increase the social element in the policy instrument whilst adapting a 4H model in its implementation that aligns Communities with the desired approach of the EC for the lasting time of the present period and the implementation of its instruments (such as Communities) as well as helping to gather experiences for the next one.

As learned in Phase 1, it is feasible and there are different approaches to increase the presence of the 'social dimension' in the innovation ecosystem and the R&I initiatives, but none of them includes or combines it with the 4H model as the EC is increasingly demanding, including the 'mission oriented' approach of the public and innovation policies. Some of the partners' experiences serve as inspiration for looking for the proper means, tools and methodology to include this new approach, as they show an active involvement of the civil society in the innovation process is possible, inside the RIS3 framework, without being disruptive or inefficient in its implementation.

The Action is called ***Innovation Camp Initiative***: PRUAB will drive an 'innovation camp' workshop with one of the existing RIS3CAT Communities in the policy instrument, the 'INNOAPAT' Community, linking it to the *CATLABS* network launched by the Managing Authority in Catalonia, in order to better connect the instrument with the social agents and general public and test the feasibility of the 4H approach inside the instrument.

So the aim is to test the methodology within the Communities framework in order to improve the use of the 4H development and governance model in the policy instrument as well as improving the presence of the '*social dimension*' in the innovation projects developed within each Community of the instrument. This will improve the performance of the instrument as well as aligning it with the next phase of the RIS3 implementation, as the European Commission proposes.

There are four main phases in the development of the action:

1. Organisation: The PRUAB will launch an open invitation to the main stakeholders involved in the Community 'INNOAPAT' and RIS3 implementation, as well as those local territories where its projects are to be developed. PRUAB will use a specific space in terms of "living-fab-lab" for the collaborative dynamics. It will cooperate with the Generalitat and the INNOAPAT coordinators in order to develop the main resources to be used in the *camp*:
   a. Stakeholder's engagement plan.
   b. Selection and capacitation of the *facilitators* and agents involved in the *camp*.
   c. Development of the guidance and tools for the *camp*: main goals; challenges; indicators; presentations and working &facilitation materials; monitoring; etc.
2. Implementation: There will be a common 1-day long session with a set structure in order to adapt the methodology to the context of the Community:

a. Introduction and plenary session.
b. Challenge presentation and work in small teams/groups: discussion and validation of the challenges; first round of proposals and discussion; summarising a
c. Presentation of each group's work and global summary.
d. Presentation of the follow-up and next steps.

There will be a follow-up of at least 24 weeks in order to verify the actual implementation of the proposals and conclusions of the *camp* in the Community and/or its projects, especially around its governance structure.

3. Feedback and evaluation: One of the main goals of the action is to verify the ability of actions such as the 'innovation camp' to foster new and better links amongst the 4H's agents. It is critical to implement a monitoring system for the expected outputs and outcomes of the action, as well as the feedback of the main stakeholders involved in the INNOAPAT Community and the Communities instrument itself. There will be a specific session of at least half a day with those stakeholders in order to analyse the implementation in the instrument and its potential diffusion.

4. Follow-up and diffusion: once the methodology is tested, for at least 12 more weeks there will be a work of diffusion and deploying of the results in the different Communities as well as an analysis of how to embed this new approach in the works for the new programming period.

The expected outputs are different proposals and solutions so as to facilitate the presence of the 4H in the governance and execution of the projects within the scope of the INNOAPAT Community, as well as materials for its diffusion within the Communities instrument and the Interreg Europe framework. The expected outcome is the actual implementation of one or more of the development of the proposals through this methodology in, at least, the governance area and/or the formulation and deployment of projects within the INNOAPAT Community.

3. **Players involved** (please indicate the organisations in the region which are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

- PRUAB: It will coordinate the execution of the action and it will lead the development of the main tools and materials, as well as the organisation and implementation of the 'innovation camp' methodology.
- Community 'INNOAPAT': As a main stakeholder and subject itself of the 'innovation camp', it will collaborate with the PRUAB in developing the organisation and implementation materials; it will also participate actively in the engagement and "recruitment" plan, as well as in acquiring a compromise to effectively implement those viable proposals derived from the *camp* in its governance and projects.
- Generalitat de Catalunya: The area responsible for the implementation of the RIS3CAT will collaborate with the PRUAB to develop the different tools and materials necessary for an effective implementation of the methodology, since it has already been used before. It will also provide insight and feedback for the outcomes and outputs of the action, as well as means for an effective implementation in the 'Communities instrument' of the RIS3CAT of them.
- ACCIÓ: As the agency responsible for the implementation of the Communities instrument, it will provide insight and feedback for the outcomes and outputs of the action, as well as the means for an effective implementation in the 'Communities instrument' as a whole once validated through the INNOAPAT Community.
- JRC: although not a regional organisation, they will be an important stakeholder through the use of its methodological approach as well as giving feedback to the organisation, implementation and evaluation of the action. They will be invited as observers and their contributions will be part of the tools and framework used for the methodology in the context of the INNOAPAT Community and the instrument as a whole.

The members of the INNOAPAT Community (technological institutions, enterprises, etc.) as well as the social fabric of its influence area will be active participants in the process.

4. Timeframe

The innovation camp will be initially held in the 1st semester of Phase 2 and deployed the results through the semesters 2 and 3. The schedule will be:

- Organisation: 12 weeks to develop the main tools and materials; 12 weeks of deployment of the stakeholder's engagement plan and reading of the location and main tools.
- Implementation: 1 day of initial session; 24 weeks of follow-up and effective implementation of the proposals.
- Feedback and evaluation: 8 weeks of back-office analysis and evaluation of outputs, outcomes and results; ½ day session of feedback and evaluation; 4 weeks of development of diffusion and communication materials.
- Diffusion: 12 weeks of follow-up work with the MA in terms of deployment of the methodology in the policy instrument and/or the development of new ones.

5. Costs (if relevant)

The estimated cost of the Action is 20.000,00€ apart from the resources being used by the Managing Authority and the PRUAB in terms of staff involved. The main costs are those related with the implementation of the 'innovation camp' methodology, since it needs of some specific capacity building in order to fully use its potential.

The main cost drivers would be the capacity building (in the methodology) and coaching (a total of 8800,00 euros) and financial help for developing the 'solution prototypes' suggested by the results of the methodology (10000,00€). It is not expected to be considered 'state aid' but if there were any ruling otherwise it would be granted under the 'minimis' condition.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

The Managing Authority as well as the PRUAB will contribute with their own manpower and will provide through regional funding the resources necessary to carry out the activities under the proposed Action.

Date:_____

Signature: _____

Stamp of the organisation (if available): _____