Improving Structural Funds for better delivery of R&D&i policies

www.interregeurope.eu/improve

DEV'UP Centre-Val de Loire

Project overview

IMPROVE
Interreg Europe

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Research & innovation

Policy instrument

The policy instrument addressed is the RIS3 of the Centre-Val de Loire region 2014-2020, its evolution for 2021-2027 and consequently the axis1 of the OT1 of the ERDF OP.

Axis 1 of the ERDF OP addresses both SME competitiveness and the capacities of the region in RDI. It is also closely linked to the S3 and to the Regional Economic Development Strategy for innovation & internationalization (SRDEII).

Both policy instruments aim:
- To encourage all types of innovation by strengthening regional research and innovation capacities;
- To make the ecological transition an asset for the industrial fabric;
- To strengthen the region's attractiveness by building on the industry and on tourism sectors having an international dimension
- To enhance the creative capacities of companies through the human capital
- To increase the number of innovative companies from 1000 to 1500 by 2020.

Good practices

Two good practices were identified :

1. **Management of the EDP at the S3 priority level through the setting up of steering committees**

The steering committees mobilize the regional innovative ecosystem around a strategy designed and implemented in a shared manner within each RIS3 priority

The interaction with the key players through the EDP is used to
- Explore new niches and market potential, as well as areas of scientific and technological opportunity.

IMPROVE
Interreg Europe

- Encourage innovation projects within the priorities and strengthen the ecosystem by providing "fertile ground" for them
- Generate decision support to the RIS3 steering committee to support it in the process of developing specific policy instruments to support innovation and provide recommendations on investment decisions.

The RIS3 priority steering committees are led by the clusters in the corresponding fields with the support of the economic development agency, which ensures the overall coherence.

Each steering committee is made up of approximately 15 to 20 people from the triple helix (academic, entrepreneurial, institutional) and directly involved in the development of the RIS3 priority.

Alongside the State and Regional referents and the coordinators from Dev'up (the regional economic development agency), the cluster team will act as project managers within each steering committee. Entrepreneurs and people from the world of research and training complete these steering committees.

Link to the good practice:

https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/5424/management-of-the-edp-at-the-s3-priority-level-through-the-setting-up-of-steering-committees/

2. Animation of the EDP to strengthen the ecosystem of environmental management

Public decision-makers and key stakeholders in the Centre-Val de Loire identified environmental metrology and engineering for the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources as one of the main development levers for the region and have made it a priority in their RIS3.

The public intervention focus and the enhancement of existing assets have built a coherent ecosystem and strengthened the various links in the natural resource management value chain.

The structuring of the ecosystem around the natural resource management value chain has resulted in investments and R&D projects (19 of which were financed by the ERDF 2014 - 2020) and numerous R&D, innovation and collaborative research projects (funded to the tune of more than €300,000 by the Region outside of the multi-million-euro ARD programmes). The beneficiaries of these aids argue that they have made it possible to increase public-private collaborations and to acquire and develop scientific skills. Companies have seen their turnover increase.

IMPROVE
Interreg Europe

Link to the good practice: https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/5423/animation-of-the-edp-to-strengthen-the-ecosystem-of-environmental-management/

Specific issues and areas of improvement

Our aim is to build innovation capabilities in order to enable the regional companies to make the shift to industrial, digital and ecological transition:

- Firstly, we have to professionalize the member of the regional economic development network that supports the companies in their innovative projects.
- Secondly, we need to better involve the triple helix actors in the coordination of the ecosystem of each RIS3 priorities.
- Thirdly, we need to structure the process of innovation support by relying on the regional assets and creating a "innovation journey".
- Fourthly, we have to foster the technology transfer activity and the way to support start-ups, especially concerning the Deep Tech
- On the other hand, we also need to strengthen innovation processes closer to the people, especially in the rural areas of our territory.
- Finally, we need to adapt our human capital to the major challenges of the above-mentioned transitions.

Identified solutions to specific issues

According to the challenges previously identified, we need to foster the technology transfer activity and the way to support start-ups, especially concerning the Deep Tech in order to:

- Favour matchmaking between researchers' profiles and SMEs' needs.

The Office for innovation (O4I) which is a new Office for Technology Transfer inverse model, this is, an interactive innovation model where the exchange of knowledge plays a key role starting from the R&D needs of the business fabric, searching for solutions within the scientific and technological

IMPROVE
Interreg Europe

offer of the SECTI, bridging the gaps and promoting collaboration from FUNDECYT-PCTEX is a good practice which we could get inspiration. Furthermore, another good practice "ADAPTER" which is a free service created by the Estonian R&D community, to offer simple access to the best of Estonian R&D for all SMEs and organizations could be also a source of inspiration.

On the other hand, we also need to strengthen innovation processes closer to the entrepreneurs, to broaden and diffusing innovation towards less innovation aware SMEs or those in less developed area.
From the actions that have emerged from the brainstorming session with our counterparts of the IMPROVE project, we intend to explore the followings ones:

- Analyse and rationalise the fragmentation in innovation-support instruments offered by clusters and by other actors in CVL.
- Reinforce the role of the intermediaries, as the actors who are best able to understand firm's needs and translate them to policy makers.
- Make the most of clusters in the definition and implementation of S3 internationalisation.
- Develop call targeted to SMEs that are struggling to enter the innovation ecosystem.

The tool "C-Voucher – Circular Value Chains in European RIS3" developed by North West Regional Development Agency (Romania) and which is an example of successful cooperation between service providers and intermediary organizations in boosting the growth of the circular economy at the regional level.
The different calls implemented in Puglia Region (Italy), such as, Innonetwork, Innolabs, Innoaid, and Tecnonidi seemed also a good source of inspiration for our own policy design.

We also need to improve the monitoring system, paying more attention to international benchmarking and to the use of open data.
We also could find inspiration on the Smart Specialisation monitoring tool implemented by Fundecyt-Pctex (Spain). In this way, the Apulian Innovation Overview (AIO), the Apulia Research Gate implemented by ARTI (Italy) and the Apulian RIS3 monitoring through questionnaire could also be a great source of inspiration.

IMPROVE
Interreg Europe

Main stakeholders involved in the project

All members of the Regional Innovation Strategy Committee (which steers the RIS3) will be involved in the project. It is composed of

- Regional Council of Centre Val de Loire
- State administration -represented by the Regional Academic Delegations for Research and Innovation (DRARI) and the Regional Directorate for the Economy, Employment, Labour and Solidarity (DREETS)
- Bpifrance (French Investment Public Bank)
- Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industries
- DEV'UP Centre-Val de Loire
- 4 Clusters (Pôle de compétitivité)
- 2 Universities (Tours and Orleans)
- 6 Research Institutes
- Rector of the Academy
- APEC (Association for the employment of executives)
- The pilots (Entrepreneurs) and co-pilots (academics) of each RIS3 priority

IMPROVE

Interreg Europe