

**InnoHEIs – *Improvement research and innovation in-
frastructure performance: from fragmented to inte-
grated sustainable cooperation***

Action plan for CATALONIA

Introduction

The INNOHEIS project aims at strengthening the role of higher education institutions (HEIs) and their research and innovation infrastructure, so that they can better contribute to regional development, by working across different dimensions, namely:

Fostering entrepreneurship and creativity in regions

Fostering entrepreneurship and creativity brings many benefits to higher education institutions and regions. InnoHEIs addressed the challenge to enhance the role of higher education institutions and their research and innovation infrastructure.

Enabling entrepreneurial discovery process

The entrepreneurial discovery process is an inclusive and interactive bottom-up process. Participants from different environments, such as policy, business and academia are discovering potential of new activities and opportunities that emerge through this interaction.

Integrating entrepreneurial knowledge

Higher education institutions and their research and innovation infrastructure can build partnerships thanks to their unique infrastructure and human capacities. Entrepreneurial knowledge is often fragmented and distributed over many organizations, companies, universities, clients and users. Higher education institution can support the integration of the entrepreneurial knowledge.

Removing barriers and enhancing collaboration

InnoHEIs partners have looked at how to mobilize higher education institutions and their research and innovation infrastructure for regional innovation development. Their aim is to remove barriers between different types of higher education institutions and their research and innovation infrastructure. And enhance their cross-institutional and cross-sectoral collaboration.

The action plan for Catalonia identifies and describes three actions, in line with the InnoHEIs scopes above, to be taken within the framework of the "National Pact for the Knowledge Society" (i.e. the National Pact for the Knowledge Society).

Part I – General information

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| Project | InnoHEIs – Improving research and innovation infrastructure performance: from fragmented to integrated sustainable cooperation |
| Partner organization | Autonomous University of Barcelona |
| Member state | Spain |
| NUTS2 territory | Catalonia (Catalonia) |
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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:

National Pact for Knowledge Society – Catalonia 2020-2030

Background:

The National Pact for Knowledge Society (PNSC) has been approved by the 78 representatives of universities, research centers, students, trade unions, business organizations, the territorial sphere and all political groups represented in the Parliament of Catalonia, during the Plenary of the Pact held in May 2020.

The pact, promoted by the Department of Business and Knowledge, is a shared strategy between universities, research and productive economy to build the Catalonia of the future.

The Pact wants to address the imbalance between knowledge generation and innovation capacity as the local scientific system is competitive at the international level yet, such excellence, is not matched when it comes to knowledge-based business innovation.

For more information click [here](#).

Relevance for INNOHEIS

The Pact pays significant attention to research infrastructure and commits to develop a new classification and mapping of current infrastructure, as well as optimizing the use of the existing infrastructures and fostering their cooperation.

More broadly, the Pact puts knowledge at the center of Catalonia's development and stresses the importance of strengthening systemic interaction among research, business, public administration, and citizenship.

Within this context, HEIs are a crucial node. The Pact acknowledges that Catalonia is home to greater scientific facilities that are recognised as unique infrastructures and require unique public agreements and efforts. These infrastructures must be improved, **but -above all- their use and collaborative development must be encouraged and become economically sustainable.** In this sense, supporting HEIs infrastructure also means ensuring that there is a culture of collaboration in which knowledge is socially co-created through the unique contribution of different actors.

All powerful and evolving research ecosystems need a variety of different scientific facilities, ranging from spaces and instruments for interaction, to small local facilities, to greater infrastructures with cutting-edge specifications. The latter, due to its size or capacity, serves a larger territory or part of the scientific community that they were designed for.

Specific lines/measures/actions of the National Pact connected to the InnoHEIs action plan for Catalonia

The action proposed in this plan fall under the lines:

1. Investment, a safe bet, which looks into developing tools for a more efficient public investment.
2. Cultivate the research system and its infrastructures, which looks into funding, mapping and making accessible innovation infrastructure.
3. Transform knowledge into prosperity and well-being, which includes measures to support and foster business innovation, and its measurement.

Part III – Details of the action

Action: Support the development of a monitoring system for the regional department of research and university

Background

The Department for Research and Universities, responsible of the addressed policy instrument, aims at improving it by shaping and later implementing a monitoring mechanism for the PNSC that is to allow a sound follow-up of the intervention logic of the instrument's activities and projects. This monitoring system is to integrate all aspects of the plan, at it shall serve to properly evaluate its results, improve the policy behind it, and ensure a continuous information flow for policymakers.

Description

The department is developing a plan, within the National Pact for the Knowledge Society, to monitor the interaction between universities and the innovation eco-system and its impact on society.

A series of initiatives are currently being defined, within several of the Pact's stream, that aim at empowering universities to contribute to society.

Following the InnoHEIs logic and learning, UAB will support the department in creating a monitoring system, which is expected to be in place in early 2023, to be properly deployed in 2023, including some testing/piloting months. In particular, in close collaboration with the department, it will:

- Select the initiatives to include in the pilot
- Define targets
- Identify the sources
- Define data collection methods
- Define indicators
- Define a monitoring communication plan.

While the policy instrument is structured and it has well-defined thematic objectives and action lines, it missed the aforementioned key element: the monitoring system. This system will be built by the Directorate General for Knowledge Transfer at the Catalan Government's Department of Universities and Research, and – together with the department's officers – the UAB team will be involved to support in the definition of this system which, as it was stated, shall be in place by early 2023, and included as part of the instrument then (as a part of the instrument itself). This system will be built in collaboration; therefore, the role of UAB – even if it does not approve the final output, which is the prerogative of the government – will be as determinant as the other members of the team.

The action has been inspired by some examples seen throughout the exchange of experience process of InnoHEIs. In particular, the Ambition Research Development (ARD) – Next generation in Centre Val De Loire. The principles underpinning ARD, namely stakeholders' collaboration for knowledge-based development, are fully aligned to the National Pact for the Knowledge Society. ARD has already gone through a set of revision and the monitoring it has implemented has allowed a more refined design of the instrument. For this reason, it will serve as an inspiration for this action.

The monitoring system will lead to a major improvement of the policy instrument, because only through a sound set of indicators capable of measuring the results of the initiatives under the PNSC, the government's responsible office will be capable of assessing the impact of the policy and make informed decisions and plans regarding its long-term implementation and evolution. *The monitoring system wants to serve as well as a tool for continuous improvement of the instrument, not just for accountability in the actions implemented under it. Therefore, the system will include indicators and other relevant inputs to provide information on the impact of the instrument, as well as the outcomes that the initiatives developed through it have in the innovation ecosystem.*

Players involved: Department for Research and Universities (Government of Catalonia, managing authority), UAB

Timeframe: September 2022- June 2023

Financial aspects: 7,500 Euros (estimated cost of staff supporting the initiative).

Indicators for monitoring: Development of a monitoring system for the social impact of universities' research (ready by June 2023).