

COVID-DISRUPTED REGIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS (CODIL)

AN INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION PROJECT FOR IMPROVING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CAPACITIES POLICIES

ABOUT

CODIL aims to **improve regional innovation policy instruments** to better support the emerging distributed-team innovation model and its key component - highly skilled mobile knowledge workers.

- **We specifically address** how the revolution in the way highly skilled knowledge workers now collaborate, enabled by disruptive technology, impacts our regional innovation patterns and models;
- **We recognise** that policy choices that can attract knowledge workers are key for a successful innovation trajectory for the region;
- **We demonstrate** how selective development of regional competences in disruptive technology can also enhance innovation performance.

Our ultimate goal is to **improve regional policy instruments** and **create an enabling environment for the distributed-team innovation model** across European regions.



Current status

We are thrilled to announce that CODIL is now into full implementation, progressing smoothly according to plan. As we move forward, we want to provide you with an overview of the project activities that have taken place during the second and third project semesters.

During this period, our team has been actively engaged in various activities aimed at achieving our shared objectives. We have successfully conducted several meetings, workshops, and staff exchanges, fostering meaningful discussions and productive exchanges of ideas. These interactions have been invaluable in shaping the direction of our project and ensuring alignment with our goals.

To identify the current situation in the regional innovation ecosystems participating in the project, each partner has successfully conducted a Context Analysis, covering different dimensions. In addition, an Interregional Report aggregating the main findings from the regional analysis was produced, which represents an important milestone allowing us to identify those areas with possibilities for improvement and where intervention is required.

We have also made significant strides in the collection of (13!) Good Practices from different regions, that serve as a basis for our learning process and the future improvement of policies.

Thanks to the dedication of everyone involved, and our collective efforts, we are well on track with our timelines, marking important progress milestones along the way.

Moving forward, we are excited to continue our collaborative efforts and build upon the momentum gained in the previous months!

Past events

Interregional Event in Seinäjoki, South Ostrobothnia (Finland)

7-8 November 2023

An incredibly productive project and knowledge transfer meeting where all project partners benefited from learning about the South Ostrobothnian examples of cooperation and innovation! We were introduced to the Ruokaprovinsi – The Food Province, the NextGen - Future Food Waste Reducing Buffet Dining, and the University Consortium of Seinäjoki, with a focus on activities related to (digital) innovation. A site visit to Prima Power company was also organized – a global leader in laser and sheet metal machinery, where we learnt about their innovation initiatives and R&D in a global “mobile” environment, and discussed the post effects of COVID to remote and on-site working. Sharing experiences and knowledge, reviewing best practices from the project’s participating regions and discussing and coordinating the upcoming project activities were also part of the rich 2-day programme.



Interregional Event in Furbo, North West Region (Ireland)

19-20 March 2024

Designed as a thematic workshop on 'Disruptive Technologies to the Service of Regional Innovation Ecosystems', set against the stunning backdrop of Ireland's breathtaking landscapes, this event offered a few days brimming with insightful discussions, dynamic presentations, and groundbreaking ideas. The event unraveled how disruptive technologies are reshaping the landscape of regional innovation ecosystems, providing the opportunity to project partners to explore the transformative potential of technologies and their implications for regional policies and strategies. A number of local innovators presented their organizations and projects, alongside several insightful site visits to the digital hubs in the region. The visit also shed light on the operations of ConnectedHubs.ie and the digital hubs network, offering valuable insights into their role in fostering innovation at the regional level.



Interregional Event in Timisoara, West Region (Romania)

11-12 June 2024

To further address the challenges of remote work, including the migration of workers, the risk of talent loss, brain drain, and fragmentation within ecosystems, at CODIL, we organized another interregional thematic seminar on “Incentives and Innovation Services to Attract and Retain Talent”. The event provided a space for project partners and stakeholders to converge and tackle the challenge of brain drain and policy readiness, and to discuss innovative solutions to retain and attract talent in our regions. Imminent professionals in the field have moderated the workshop sessions on Incentives and innovation services to attract and retain talent, Where is the Brain Drain starting, Migration of Brains and How to Attract and Retain Talents and Brain Drain Tendencies and Labor Force Attractiveness, followed by in-depth discussions at the heart of talent retention. The event served to identify incentives and instruments that can contribute to increasing our regions’ attractiveness and adapt and renew policies to attract and retain talent.



First Staff Exchange in Ireland

20-21 March 2024

This initial staff exchange served as a platform for sharing knowledge among project collaborators and stakeholders. The initiative involved immersive visits to significant stakeholders within the local ecosystem of the North west region of Ireland. These visits encompassed insightful tours to various digital hubs across the region, including gteic@An Cheathrú Rua, gteic@An Spidéal, Portershed Digital Hub, as well as the iHub and Platform 94 hubs in Galway City. This exchange not only facilitated knowledge transfer but also provided invaluable insights into the digital landscape within the region. These interactions have laid a solid foundation for future collaborations and advancements in our project.



Second Staff Exchange in Timisoara, Romania

12-13 June 2024

The second round of staff exchanges provided extensive knowledge-sharing among partners and project stakeholders. This exchange included insightful visits to key stakeholders within the West Region ecosystem, such as the Nokia Innovation Garage, FABER, The Institute for Advanced Environmental Research, West University of Timisoara, ID/IFR and e-Learning Center, Politehnica University of Timisoara. These visits were instrumental in fostering deeper insights and collaborative opportunities, enriching our project endeavors. We engaged in fruitful discussions, explored innovative approaches, and strengthened our partnerships, further solidifying our collective commitment to project success.



JOIN US in enhancing regional capacities to address innovation!

Explore the wealth of Good Practices we have gathered within CODIL

THE GAELTACHT GTEIC DIGITAL NETWORK

Údarás na Gaeltachta's strategic plan 2018 – 2020 included the development of a network of 31 digital hubs across Gaeltacht regions, offering high-speed broadband and workspaces to foster employment in Technology, MedTech, Digital, and Creative sectors. The gteic network, now comprising 27 hubs across five counties, caters to various community sizes, from town centers to rural areas. Offering essential amenities, networking events, and training, the network supports entrepreneurs, facilitates the return of the diaspora, and provides opportunities for remote work. Funded by various sources including Údarás and government programs, the gteic network has seen success with over 840 workspaces, 130 companies, and 441 employees, contributing to regional development and global connectivity.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/greasan-gteicdigiteach-na-gaeltachtatthe-gaeltacht-gteic-digital-network>

CONNECTED HUBS

In response to the changing work landscape due to COVID-19, the Irish government launched ConnectedHubs.ie, part of "Our Rural Future" led by Minister Heather Humphreys TD. This initiative aimed to establish a national network of remote working hubs, addressing the need for sustainable remote work options in rural areas. Approximately 400 hubs were identified and invited to join the Connected Hubs Network, facilitated by an online platform, ConnectedHubs.ie. This platform streamlined hub access for remote workers and offered resources for hub managers. Stakeholders included the Department of Rural & Community Development, hub managers, remote workers, and the public. Funding is ongoing, with evidence of success including 321 hubs on the platform, increased bookings, and initiatives like the National Hub Summit and Hub Voucher Scheme, contributing to reduced congestion, lower emissions, and community revitalization.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/connected-hubs>

DRIVING INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: LAVAL AGGLO'S TELEWORK EXPERIENCE

The public sector introduced telework to enhance flexibility and foster innovation, with Laval Agglo recognizing benefits like productivity gains and improved work-life balance. Around 15 to 20 employees across various roles participated in a 6-month to 1-year teleworking experiment, supported with necessary equipment. Evaluation outcomes were presented to a piloting group for potential implementation. Positive results were observed in work-life balance and productivity. Agents expressed the need for increased flexibility, leading to official teleworking implementation since 04/21. This initiative required minimal resources and has led to recognized improvements in work quality and efficiency, highlighting its success within the organization.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/driving-innovation-in-the-public-sector-laval-agglos-successful-telework-experience>

REMOTE SUPPORT FOR COMPANIES

LMT offers online training for startups via a dedicated platform featuring training videos, articles, podcasts, and toolkits. Since inception, 12 articles, 21 videos (3.5 hours total), and 60 educational newsletters have been produced, providing startups with valuable guidance throughout their development stages. In parallel, LMT conducts monthly webinars for regional SMEs focusing on innovation and digital transformation topics, with each webinar attracting 25 participants. In total, 10 webinars were organized in 2021, 5 in 2022, and 6 in 2023, benefiting over 600 individuals. These initiatives, funded internally with small fees from supported startups, have proven successful in supporting startup growth and facilitating SMEs' digital transitions.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/remote-support-for-companies>

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FABLAB NETWORK SLOVENIA

Slovenia established the national reference network FabLab in 2017 as part of the Interreg Europe ERUDITE project, led by the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Ljubljana, and the Information Society Directorate, Ministry of Public Administration. The network aims to harness the entrepreneurial potential of local communities by promoting innovation and economic development across all Slovenian regions. It has garnered interest from various organizations, including businesses, schools, and public institutes. Each FabLab lists underutilized technological equipment and expertise, focused on smart specialization areas, to facilitate accessibility and collaboration. With 80 partners, including 27 creative hubs, the FabLab network provides extensive training and equipment resources, supporting innovation and collaboration nationwide.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/fablab-network-slovenia-0>

DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB (DIH) SLOVENIA

DIH Slovenia serves as a one-stop-shop for digital transformation, offering services to enhance digital competencies, share best practices, and facilitate access to data for entrepreneurship. It collaborates with cross-sectoral partners to build a sustainable ecosystem supporting digital innovation. Co-financed by the Republic of Slovenia and the EU (ERDF), the initiative aims to establish a national digital ecosystem and directly support SMEs. With 7 employees and strategic partnerships, DIH Slovenia has engaged 945 business organizations in enhancing their digital transformation, demonstrating its impactful role in advancing digitalization in Slovenia.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/digital-innovation-hub-dih-slovenia>

PUBLIC PRIVATE PEOPLE PARTNERSHIP DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB – 4PDIH

Operating within the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, in partnership with the Association of Municipalities and towns of Slovenia and the Ministry of Public Administration, 4PDIH is a Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) launching predictive tools for future job and competence needs. It addresses workforce challenges through re-qualification, upskilling, and new study programs for the digital age. Serving as a one-stop-shop for digital transformation and competence development, 4PDIH aims to enhance digital competencies, share experiences, and support government regulation adaptation. 4PDIH has received recognition such as the WSIS Prize 2021 and boasts a strategic partnership of over 20 key partners, positioning it as a model for comprehensive DIH addressing digitization challenges.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/public-private-people-partnership-digital-innovation-hub-4pdih>

SeAMK INNOVATION WEEK

During SeAMK Innovation Week, 800 second-year students collaborate in 12 multidisciplinary groups on company assignments guided by coaches. Each group, comprising 60-80 students, generates 10 to 12 solution proposals. The week fosters multidisciplinary teamwork, preparing students for future careers, with assignments spanning various fields. Clients pay €250 to participate, covering space needs, while university funds support staffing and facilities. Feedback from participating organizations is consistently positive, with companies benefitting from innovative solutions generated by students for future development endeavors.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/seamk-innovation-week-0>

HUBI25 COMMUNAL WORKSPACE

HUBI25 communal workspace aims to enhance the region's attractiveness and economic diversification by providing collaborative teleworking spaces and digital services for businesses. It serves as a center of excellence, fostering partnerships, networking, and new business creation, with separate workstations, common areas, and outdoor spaces. Events like community breakfasts, themed lunches, and well-being days have attracted audiences from both HUBI25 clients and surrounding areas. In cooperation with various partners, including JAMI, SeAMK, JPYP, and Leader Aisapari, HUBI25 activities have been primarily covered by a national fund. With 50 registered customers, HUBI25 has become a regional hub supporting career development and contributing to the vitality of Alajärvi and the surrounding region.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/hubi25-communal-workspace>

UVT DIGITAL & GREEN LIVING LAB

UVT Digital & Green Living Lab (LL) is a community of partners addressing climate change and sustainability challenges. It serves as a platform for testing green technologies and sustainable practices, fostering innovation, and enhancing community well-being. Stakeholders include academic, research, and business communities, local authorities, NGOs, and multinational companies. LL embeds its approach in structural processes, builds capacity through training, and engages stakeholders in multi-stakeholder initiatives. Successes include the creation of the Centre for Innovation and Tech Transfer and collaborative initiatives promoting technology creation, innovation, and research, such as IP training and the UVT Urban Garden.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/uvtdigital-and-green-living-lab-0>

CHALLENGES & COMPETENCES

The “Challenge & Competencies” program aims to bridge the gap between traditional SMEs and innovative solutions by bringing together local students and companies. During the week-long challenge, students work in teams to develop digital projects for local businesses, utilizing their skills and creativity. This initiative benefits local high schools, students, companies, and business support organizations. The program has seen significant success since 2011, with 13 editions involving 9 different schools, 954 students, and 165 companies. Feedback indicates high satisfaction levels among participating companies, with many continuing to develop student projects into real products or services.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/challenges-competencies-0>

XTELA PROJECT

The Xtela project, led by SGPCTCAN, addresses startup challenges by providing innovative spaces and connections with larger companies. Located in the Xtela Tower, the initiative offers multifunctional areas for collaboration and innovation, along with mentoring, training, and networking opportunities. Key objectives include accelerating startup growth, driving digital transformation, and fostering public-private collaborations. Open to startups in robotics, AI, big data, and energy sustainability, the project is financed by the General Direction of Innovation and has no cost for participating startups. Successes include startups meeting challenges posed by large companies, resulting in mutual benefits and idea implementation.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/xtela-project-0>

INNOV-8-2-CREATE

The INNOV-8-2-CREATE Programme, funded by Horizon Europe and led by the University of Galway, aims to boost innovation and collaboration in Europe, addressing regional disparities. Through webinars and practical sessions, stakeholders engage in targeted pre-accelerator programs and professional skill development. The program provides a toolkit for commercialization, methodologies to enhance Innovator Readiness Level, and activities related to EDI in Innovation and patent applications. With a primary objective of fostering cooperation and collaboration, the program aligns with SDGs 4, 8, and 9, contributing to societal and economic development. Tangible outputs include feasibility grants, commercial grant applications, and collaborations with industry, demonstrating significant success.

Learn more about this Good Practice at: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/innov-8-2-create>

Upcoming events

Nov

Interregional Event & Thematic Workshop “The Role of Social Innovation in Regional Innovation Ecosystems”

November 2024, Cantabria, Spain

Apr

Interregional Event & Thematic Workshop “New business models for sustainable innovation hubs”

April 2025, Laval, France

Event Aim: To seek new models adapted to revert the reduced levels of occupation caused by the delocalisation of companies and home workers.

Nov

Third Staff Exchange in Cantabria, Spain

November 2024

Apr

Fourth Staff Exchange in Laval, France

April 2025

JOIN US in enhancing regional capacities to address innovation!

Project Partners

- University of Ljubljana (SI)
- Údarás na Gaeltachta (IE)
- Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia (FI)
- West Romania Regional Development Agency (RO)
- Regional Government of Cantabria (ES)
- Laval Mayenne Technopole (FR)

Associated Partners

- Slovenian Ministry of Digital Transformation, Slovenia
- Laval Agglomeration, France

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Future newsletters

Make sure to stay tuned on our project webpage and social media accounts for the release of more information on CODIL. Our project newsletters are expected to be released every six months and will focus on project updates and interesting aspects of the project.

[**www.interregeurope.eu-codil**](http://www.interregeurope.eu-codil)

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REGIONAL COUNCIL OF
South Ostrobothnia



ETELÄ-POHJANMAAN LIITTO
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