

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

# Innovation Union

The contribution of Europe's regions and cities



Regions and Cities supporting  
**Europe2020**  
Europe's growth strategy



Brussels  
27 November 2013

Exhibition  
on good  
practices



# Innovation Union

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## Smart Specialisation Platform

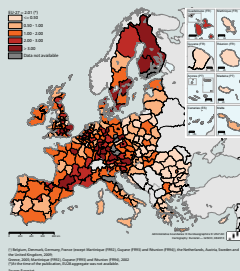


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Innovation Union is the European Union strategy to create an innovation-friendly environment that makes it easier for great ideas to be turned into products and services. Innovation provides real benefits for citizens, consumers, and workers. It speeds up and improves the way new products, industrial processes and services are conceived, developed and produced. It is the key not only to creating more jobs, building a greener society and improving quality of life, but also to maintaining competitiveness in the global market.

Based on a broad concept of innovation and over 30 activities, the Innovation Union flagship initiative commits the EU to increase investment in research to 3% of GDP by 2020. Studies indicate that such investment could create 3.7 million jobs by 2025. Between 2007 and 2011, public and private spending increased from 1.85% to 2.03% of GDP, but recently it appears that disparities between regions are growing after years of convergence.

R&D intensity by NUTS 2 regions, 2010 (1)  
(total R & D expenditures as a % of GDP)



Regions and cities are increasingly recognised as important players in the EU's research and development landscape. Today, however, only one in ten regions in the EU spends more than 3% of its GDP on research and innovation. Only 27 of the EU's 272 regions together amount for over 40% of Europe's investment in innovation. Most of these leading regions have important competences, capacities and budgets and follow a 'smart specialisation' approach to integrated regional development and the management of economic change and recovery. Moreover, between 2014 and 2020 'smart specialisation strategies' will be a priority for all regions under the European Structural and Investment Funds accompanied by the new "Horizon 2020" programme and other initiatives.

Four aspects are relevant to regions and cities in increasing their innovation performance:

- Smart specialisation strategies: In 2014-2020, all regions will have to implement such strategies. This requires capacity-building, exchange of information on existing approaches and ensuring synergies with the Horizon 2020 programme.
- Innovation, enterprises and jobs: In many regions employment effects of innovation strategies depend on good governance between public authorities and the private sector, entrepreneurial discovery and synergies between innovation and regional development.
- Networking across borders: Experiences from projects funded by the European Territorial Cooperation programmes and the role of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology are important to facilitate cross-border learning on regional innovation strategies.
- Open Innovation 2.0: Recently the concept of Open Innovation 2.0 – based on principles such as integrated collaboration, shared value and rapid adoption – has gained importance at local level and pioneering cities and regions seek to share their experiences with others.



Smart Specialisation is a strategic approach to economic development through targeted support to Research and Innovation. It will be the basis for Structural Fund investments in R&I as part of the future Cohesion Policy's contribution to the Europe 2020 jobs and growth agenda.

The S3 Platform assists EU countries and regions to develop, implement and review Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3). Established in 2011 by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO)

following the Communication 'Regional Policy contributing to smart growth in Europe 2020', the role of the S3 Platform is to provide information, methodologies, expertise and advice to national and regional policy makers, as well as promote mutual learning, trans-national co-operation and contribute to academic debates around the concept of smart specialisation.

Registration on the S3 Platform is open to regional and national administrations of EU, candidate and neighbouring countries. The S3 Platform is hosted by the JRC's Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) in Seville.



[www.s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu](http://www.s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu)



[www.ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union](http://www.ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union)





# Innovation Union

## Apulia innovation in progress: ICT Living Labs Apulia, Italy



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Apulian ICT Living Labs is a project set up in the Apulia region to test new approaches to innovation. Living Labs are "open ecosystems" where the user is actively involved in the process of research and in the experimentation of innovative solutions, through the use of Information and Communication Technologies. New products and services are designed through ideas and knowledge exchange and networking amongst researchers, companies and groups of citizens. The aim is to transfer research activities of the closed corporate laboratories to real-life contexts, where citizens and users can themselves become "co-creators" of the results obtained.

The intervention by the Apulia Region, Industrial Research and Innovation Service, co-funded by the ERDF, started in April 2012 and began through a new phase of

confrontation between the public and private entities as part of a regional innovation system, generating a precondition of communication, cooperation and listening to collective needs.

More than 50 companies are presently involved in 34 Living Labs, which are implementing projects within the following domains: environment, security and territorial protection; cultural heritage; energy; e-government; social inclusion and healthy and active ageing; education and training; creative industries; transport and mobility.

The new model adopted which includes R&I policies is a great opportunity for economic, social and cultural change. Tests are currently underway, for example, on the remote care of patients, LED lighting systems for pedestrian safety at night and the monitoring of hydrological risks.



[www.livinglabs.regione.puglia.it](http://www.livinglabs.regione.puglia.it)

## Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Network The Basque Country, Spain



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The Basque Country is one of the most industrialised regions in Spain and is known for its successful industrial transformation. Over the last 30 years, the region has implemented its science, technology and innovation policy driven by a need to boost industrial competitiveness. R&D and innovation policies have been strategic for regional development during this period. Since 1997 a market and client-oriented smart technological infrastructure has been put in place for complementary and coordinated networking.

The Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Network is composed of the Science System, the Technology System and Innovation Support System. The network covers practically all organisations and institutional agents that carry out activities related to the creation and spread of information in the Basque Country.

Today this network regroupes more than 100 non-profit institutions including principally:

- 14 technology centres and the foundations that regroup them (Tecnalia and IK4);
- Over 35 intermediary institutions involved in knowledge and technology diffusion;
- Seven co-operative research centres (CICs);
- Four basic excellence research centres (BERCs);
- Three public research centres;
- Two health sector research units;
- Over 40 enterprise research units;
- Six certification and testing laboratories;
- Eight technological parks.

The Basque innovation system is distinctive among OECD regions for its strong institutions that support applied research, the degree of its public-private collaboration and its low-level of public research.



[www.euskadimnueva.es/es/innovacion-tecnologica](http://www.euskadimnueva.es/es/innovacion-tecnologica)

## TalentCampus: Training to reveal, develop and capitalize talent | Bourgogne and Franche-Comté, France



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European education and training policy clearly states that "creativity, the ability to think laterally, adaptability and other 'transversal' skills will be valued more than the specific bodies of knowledge that schools have traditionally taught". The TalentCampus -project aims to increase excellence in higher education by exploring soft skills' development.

TalentCampus was created in 2012 by a cluster of Universities and higher education schools located in Bourgogne and Franche-Comté and by the national agency for PhD-support (ABG Intell'agence). It has been awarded by a national call and highlighted by the regional councils in Smart Specialization in human capital development.

Proposed in 3 day-workshops and two-week summer, winter, spring and autumn schools, the TalentCampus develops competences complementary to academic abilities such as

self-confidence, concentration, communication, leadership, behavior in society, emotional intelligence and stress management. To date, over 120 persons have followed the TalentCampus programmes. First results of the scientific evaluation show that TalentCampus candidates increase their creativity, self-esteem and motivation for a better employability.

The respect of social diversity is a mandatory key factor in the success of TalentCampus training events. Each session gathers teenagers from high school, students (undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD), employees, and unemployed people. TalentCampus methodology follows three axes: active pedagogy and innovative contents learning, collective immersion and individual coaching. Next challenges for the team are the dissemination of best practices, scientific publications and international sessions.



[www.ecoletalentcampus.fr](http://www.ecoletalentcampus.fr)



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## Brussels Sustainable Economy Brussels, Belgium



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food, and Green Chemistry and Green/White Biotechnology.

As part of this larger project, the BSE Academy is an accelerator programme for entrepreneurship. This is a 6-month coaching and support course designed to enable eight groups of three people to develop their business ideas. Selection is based on a call for candidates who either come with their existing start-up proposal or develop a business plan during the course. The course targets young university leavers, employees and job seekers with a certain educational attainment level.

Brussels Sustainable Economy (BSE) is a Brussels Capital Region initiative designed to stimulate new enterprises, and therefore jobs, based on the creation of environmentally orientated economic activities.

The project is part of a programme to improve conditions in a disadvantaged inner-area of the city (a so called Priority intervention zone) and targets six specific environmental circuits: Eco-construction, Renewable energy, Waste, Water, Sustainable

 [www.bseacademy.be](http://www.bseacademy.be)

## NovaMedTech - A catalyst for new products and services | Eastern-Central Sweden



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network of participants and continuous state-of-the-art studies, NovaMedTech is an important source of knowledge in biomedical engineering.

NovaMedTech supports the development of new biomedical products and services and focuses on entrepreneurship in healthcare, academia and business. The project identifies and supports ideas with commercial potential in order to create new products and services. NovaMedTech contributes to the medical technology field in Eastern-Central Sweden. The objective is that the region will become the national leader in the field.

The network includes a large number of international contacts in several countries, comprising of healthcare professionals, academics, businesses and organisations. The program arranges conferences on topics, such as prototype development and market preparation. It aims to identify knowledge gaps and activities are arranged to raise competence levels. Due to the broad

A new, unique working model was developed to identifying innovative product ideas with commercial potential, which are supported through coaching, networking and the provision of capital grants. The project has brought over a dozen new products to the market and at the end of the project, 25 new companies will be created, 60 new innovations identified and around 60 companies will have been strengthened. So far, a wide range of new products have been developed, such as advanced technology in hospital care (brain surgery, magnetic resonance technology and radiology), aids for elderly care (home equipment and bathroom aids) and information technology (journal systems and web services).

 [www.novamedtech.se](http://www.novamedtech.se)

## Open Innovation – collaborate to innovate Edinburgh, United Kingdom



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products or services and has run 96 open innovation-themed activities and events. Partner activities include:

- Turing festival and Innovation Dublin: Annual celebrations of digital culture, creativity and innovation;
- Citrus Saturday: Opportunity for pupils from schools to be mentored by students from a local university and learn from the experience of setting-up and running a lemonade stand on the day - this has successfully been run in London, Edinburgh, Somerset, Dublin and Ghent;
- Research by Kassel University into the uses of Open Innovation across Europe;
- Student pitching competitions for new business ideas and solutions to real SME problems;
- Mentoring and training for SMEs, including boot camps and master classes, encouraging collaboration with universities and the commercialisation of research.

The Open Innovation Project aims to create jobs and new businesses by stimulating the application of collaborative open innovation models to co-create and develop new products and services. Project partners work on three themes: Open communities (innovative solutions to societal challenges), Open business (open innovation strategies for SMEs) and Open research (entrepreneurship and commercialisation in the higher education sector).

In this project, Edinburgh City Council brings together local governments, universities, business support services and other public bodies from the UK, France, Germany, Ireland and Belgium. This partnership, through the dissemination of Open Innovation techniques and practices, has contributed to the creation of new enterprises, jobs, products and services within North West Europe.

In Edinburgh, the project has so far created 22 jobs, 19 business start-ups, 50 new

 [www.openinnovationproject.co.uk](http://www.openinnovationproject.co.uk)





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## Brainport Eindhoven Region, The Netherlands



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Over the past 20 years, Brainport Eindhoven Region has become a centre of knowledge-intensive industries which include high-tech systems and materials, food, automotive, Lifetec and design.

Faced with the decline of its heavy industry in the early nineties, Eindhoven wished to rebuild its reputation as a technological stronghold. It did this by fostering a high level of cooperation between regional stakeholders. Representatives from local government, knowledge institutes, SMEs and large corporations – such as Philips – came together to form the Brainport Foundation.

Brainport Development is the executive organisation of the Brainport Foundation. Its role is to strengthen Brainport as a top technology region. It does this by:

- Developing the regional strategy;

- Encouraging regional, national and international projects and programmes;
  - Promoting Brainport at home and abroad;
  - Providing business advice and funding, incubation facilities, business premises and business centres to the region's industry.
- Today Brainport Eindhoven Region:
- Has some 745,000 inhabitants;
  - Is attracting 10% of all foreign direct investments;
  - Is home to 15% of all research personnel in the Netherlands;
  - Accounts for 24% of all national R&D spending;
  - Accounts for 37% of all Dutch patents.
- The Brainport 2020 strategy aims to turn the entire southeast Netherlands area – with Brainport Eindhoven as its centre – into one of the top 3 technological regions in Europe.



[www.brainport.nl/en](http://www.brainport.nl/en)

## Protecting innovative ideas and turning them into a commercial reality | London, United Kingdom



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The Innovating for Growth project aims to support small businesses to transform their innovative ideas for expansion into a viable business plan by harnessing the information resources and business expertise of the UK's national library.

The British Library is one of the world's greatest research libraries, and it is also an established place for business support because it holds the largest collection of intellectual property (IP) and business information in the world, and we combine this with face-to-face support, advice and mentoring.

The Library's Business & IP Centre has been successfully helping entrepreneurs to start up and grow for seven years, and the Centre's unique strength lies in making the critical

link between IP and business information. There are three main dimensions to the innovative approach to fostering growth on Innovating for Growth:

- Firstly, the IP advisors provide much needed free and impartial advice to small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on how to legally protect their novel ideas and keep all the benefits of innovation to themselves.
- Secondly, it provides free access to €5.8m worth of knowledge and information, including high-value market research reports, company data, trade journals and IP specifications, which helps SMEs to develop their business plans and turn their growth ideas into a commercial reality.
- Thirdly, it provides many opportunities for SMEs to meet peers, spark ideas and develop new business opportunities at regular networking events, including the 'Growth Club' evenings.



[www.bl.uk/bipc/innovating.html](http://www.bl.uk/bipc/innovating.html)

## Bioindustry Park Silvano Fumero S.p.A. and bioPmed Piemonte Healthcare cluster | Piemonte, Italy



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Bioindustry Park Silvano Fumero is a Science and Technology Park located in Piemonte near Turin. The park promotes and develops the life sciences sector. The park is a limited company with a public majority.

Since 2009 Bioindustry Park acts as cluster management company for the development of the regional cluster bioPmed. Created thanks to Regione Piemonte, it gathers more than 80 companies, associations and research centres and three universities that signed an agreement to create, build, support and animate the local cluster. Some 250 other companies are also linked to this core group and involved in all activities.

The initiative aims to:

- Collect the companies' needs, boosting knowledge sharing of how to reach a critical mass of investment on specific topics;

- Support the mobility of human resources and the attraction of talented people;
- Boost internationalisation and inter-sector knowledge and technology transfer;
- Provide access to specialised and high added-value services;
- Stimulate entrepreneurship, especially among young researchers;
- Attract new investments in the region and stimulate the growth of innovative start-ups.

The bioPmed strategy is based on partnerships with other local actors and on innovative technologies following the "personalised healthcare paradigm". BioPmed is member of the Council of European Bio Regions and a partner of different EU funded projects such as the world class cluster initiative BioClusters ([www.bioclusters.eu](http://www.bioclusters.eu)).



[www.bioindustrypark.eu](http://www.bioindustrypark.eu)



[www.biopmed.eu](http://www.biopmed.eu)





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## PICTIC Platform Rhône-Alpes Region, France



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The ERDF co-funded PICTIC aims at developing large-area flexible printed electronics and at delivering solutions for the integration of new active functions into smart devices and new products of the economic sectors in Rhône-Alpes like plastic industry, textile, logistics, food, paper or packing. It is one of the necessary elements to foster the whole value chain of the electronics industry in Rhône-Alpes. The objective of the PICTIC is to support and reinforce industrialisation in the sector of "new electronics" in regional, national and European companies.

This project has been labelled by the competitiveness clusters Minialogic, Plastipolis and Techterra. This project represents 3.8 million euros, out of which 1.9 million public funding.



[www.iten.com.fr/fr/plateformes\\_technologies/pictic.htm](http://www.iten.com.fr/fr/plateformes_technologies/pictic.htm)

Technology platforms are one of the assets of Rhône-Alpes Region in order to foster innovation. Their implementation contributes to develop closer links between research and industry by improving the skills of the stakeholders in a given sector. This is where the research outputs can be converted into new products and services in the companies. They help the broad diffusion of knowledge towards the industrial and scientific regional fabric.

Technology platforms enable the realisation of industrial projects particularly for SMEs which have then an easy access to all form of specific equipments, human capital, prototyping and training. One of the most successful technology platforms in Rhône-Alpes is the PICTIC platform (Component Printing Platform for ICT and Captors).

## Competence centres of Slovenia: a national instrument to increase scientific and industrial competitiveness Slovenia



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The Competence Centres initiative is based on public-private partnership, co-financed in 85% from the European regional development fund. Seven competence centres aim to be a sustainable and efficient tool for implementing smart specialization strategies and achieving EU and Horizon 2020 goals in Slovenia.

Each centre is a R&D ecosystem run by industrial partners. It connects industry and public research institutions, with a common mission of strengthening technology competencies in the strategic industries and problem domains – such as low productivity – in Slovenia.

The competence centres develop capabilities and capacities to use technologies for innovative solutions to social, business and environmental challenges. The Centres address the challenges between the



[www.cocosi.si](http://www.cocosi.si)

traditional industries and sectors (such as car-industry), enabling the development of hi-tech products in «emerging industries» and creating new technology and business clusters.

With more than 50 companies and 30 research labs involved in the horizontal CoCoSi – network today, it is considered a success story of the Slovenian science and technology policy: Over 150 new hi-tech innovative products and services have been developed and access to new global markets (China, Brazil, India, Japan) has become possible with above average value added products. Moreover, the competence centres have significantly improved private investments in R&D and technology, with over 20M€ in last three years and more to follow to self developed products and to achieve the requested ROIs.

## Innovation Park South Moravia, Czech Republic



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The South Moravian Innovation Centre (JIC) promotes enterprise skills development and commercialisation of research in South Moravian Region, bringing together all higher education institutions in the region in a powerful partnership that aims to maximise the contribution of higher education to regional and national economies.

Today, the JIC Innovation Park houses almost 60 innovative companies and start-ups ranging from online services, software engineering, computer security, civil engineering to biotechnology, bioinformatics and robotics. Their products and services are used daily by millions of users worldwide.

The Innovation Park provides tailor-made consulting services both through its in-house team and through a network of external mentors. It organizes workshops,

conferences, educational and networking activities. It provides access to in-house PR services and office space and provides a network of specialized service providers.

Companies in JIC Innovation Park have also access to seed capital through JIC Seed Fund which caters for business segment of young innovative start-ups that is otherwise neglected by the Czech financing institutions.

JIC Innovation Park is a service provided by the South Moravian Innovation Centre in Brno. Its overarching mission is: "Empowering people to create businesses that change the world."

The overall goal is to contribute to creation of 5 globally leading companies by 2015 as well as at least one company with a turnover of more than 1 bil. CZK by 2020 and more than 2000 highly qualified jobs to the regional ecosystem.



[www.jic.cz/home](http://www.jic.cz/home)







# Innovation Union

## CATE – Cluster for Accelerator Technology Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak-region, European project



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achieved through technology transfer from the academy to the companies in several steps: a) through customized courses, b) through organized visits to large-scale research facilities in Europe, c) through "learning by doing" in a pilot project, and d) through networking.

The project is based on the knowledge and experience of the participating research groups of the universities, combined with the knowledge and experience of the accelerator experts from the involved research facilities and of the regional councils and business organisations in mapping out relevant companies.

All together fourteen partners are involved in CATE. CATE is strategically important to the region and has already helped to create partnerships between business, cross-border partnerships and new business opportunities that would not have happened without CATE.



[www.cateproject.org](http://www.cateproject.org)

Cluster for Accelerator Technology (CATE) is an Interreg-project in the region of Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak. Two world-class particle accelerators, the European Spallation Source, ESS, and the MAX-IV facility, are to be built in southern Sweden. They will primarily, be used for research in the fields of material sciences, life sciences and medicine. Their construction, however, will create new business opportunities for companies in Europe in general and in Sweden, Denmark and Norway in particular in many different sectors.

The main purpose of CATE is to strengthen the skills of companies in the Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak region in the field of accelerator technology so that they will become more competitive and can take advantage of the potential of these two research facilities. The skills development is

## CluStrat - New cluster concepts nurture emerging industries | European project



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By cooperating in clusters, innovative companies and research institutes that work in emerging industries can make their regions more competitive. The CENTRAL EUROPE project CluStrat offers new concepts to help support the cross-fertilisation of creative ideas through clusters. Project partners (from Germany, Austria, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia) develop a joint strategy on enhancing the capacity of clusters in Central Europe while promoting a dialogue about policy changes that can further this kind of innovation through cooperation.

Innovation at the interface of traditional industries and enabling technologies, as well as new services is a key tool. But how can the necessary cross-fertilisation of competences and ideas be achieved? The focal point for



[www.clustrat.eu](http://www.clustrat.eu)

these are the clusters in the regions, since they convene a critical mass of competent enterprises and R&D institutions etc. The CluStrat's joint strategy with new cluster concepts will equip innovation policy makers across Central Europe with new approaches for fostering the necessary cross-fertilisation. Focus is put on cooperation between clusters not only within, but also across regions and countries. Cross-sector collaborations that address concrete problems, while taking account of the practical demands of users, are needed for emerging industries. This is expected to unlock regional growth and will open up new markets to Europe's SMEs. Moreover, the new cluster concepts incorporate several cross-cutting issues including internationalisation, technology transfer and gender in innovation.

## EURIS – Embracing Open Innovation in Europe European project



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Five regions have come together with the aim of promoting Open Innovation through EURIS (European Collaborative and Open Regional Innovation Strategies). These regions consider that Open Innovation can be assessed from a regional perspective, contributing to policy debates on how regions can enhance their innovation ecosystems leading to collaborative Research and Innovation (R&I) efforts.

Following a strategy based upon knowledge exchange, experimentation through six inter-regional sub-projects and a strategic thinking process, EURIS have come up with a corpus of actionable insights showcasing which policies better help create favourable conditions for building open regional innovation ecosystems.

Embracing Open Innovation in Europe: The Best Practices' Guide in Open Innovation Policies is a selection of policies which

contribute to the start-up of innovation ecosystems such as collaborative R&I, Intellectual Property management and access to finance.

The Open Innovation Toolbox is a booklet of 10 practical tools targeting companies, networks, clusters and research centres in their first steps towards open and collaborative R&I.

Policy Recommendations for Opening Regional Innovation Ecosystems is a set of 35 policy recommendations, resulting from the combined learning, good practices and new models developed, for the promotion of regional innovation policies which can really make a difference in the embracing of Open Innovation.

As a result of EURIS, the five partner regions have also proposed new developments on their own RIS3 for further opening up their ecosystems.



[www.euris-programme.eu](http://www.euris-programme.eu)





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## MICRON – Development and manufacturing a new generation electric vehicle prototype | European project



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- Partners with expertise and responsibility;
- Frequent communication;
- Fast decision making due to intensive discussions with customers;
- Integration of correct products and suppliers;
- Using an existing network to gain efficient results.

Technical procedures in the car's development included: Styling and design, simulation, electrical planning, part production and assembly, supplier management, project management, media management, publicity, testing, et al.

This good practice was identified by the PROSESC project, co-financed by the INTERREG IVC programme, where nine project partners focused analysis on the contribution of producer services for sustainable road transport, regional innovativeness and cross-sectoral synergies.



Some 30 suppliers in the automotive field cooperated to design and realise a fully-functioning electric vehicle prototype in 6 months. Generally, smaller companies are only addressed to support the automotive industry in development stages 2-4. However the new manufacturing concept enabled the suppliers to be better involved in the early-stage processes. To make this possible, the latest design and simulation techniques were used by the team to shorten the design process. Techniques from previous partnerships between suppliers were used and developed.

The project team balanced customer wishes and possibilities in order to efficiently coordinate companies and achieve results in short timescale.

The project involved good practises which were integrated throughout the entire car design and manufacturing processes, including:

## NeuroRescue European project



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Implemented under the 7th Framework Program and the Regions of Knowledge initiative, NeuroRescue gathers the following partners: Bayern Innovativ and Forum MedTech Pharma e.V. (Bavaria), Parc de Salut (Catalonia), Medipole (Central Hungary), Eurobiomed and Regional Council of PACA (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur).

To support understanding and response to mental disorders, dementia and neurodegenerative diseases NeuroRescue aims at:

- Helping companies become more competitive by enhancing access to research excellence, funding mechanisms and innovation through the improved interconnection of the actors;
- Promoting the collaboration, the exchange and the dissemination of best practices related to Neurosciences at the European level and beyond;
- Supporting the internationalisation efforts of academics and research institutes in the field of neurosciences through improved

collaboration between themselves and with SMEs;

- Supporting policy-makers in developing innovative clusters and healthcare policies;
  - Increase prevention and patient care issues linked to neurosciences.
- For 3 years, the NeuroRescue project has focused on:
- Mapping out the potential for setting up an integrative model to address all scientific aspects of mental health;
  - Providing mechanisms to speed up bench to the bedside research, and accelerate the time to market for products and services in the field of mental health applications (industrial applications in medicine, medical devices and ICT solutions);
  - Gaining a better understanding of behavioural aspects of patients suffering from dementia;
  - Addressing the increasing societal burden of an ageing population suffering from mental disorders (policy-making).



## The OpenAlps Project: Open Innovation in Alpine SMEs | European project



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Globalisation and growing international competition lead to ever shorter product life cycles, which in turn result in higher cost and innovation pressure. In order to remain competitive on a sustained basis it is now more than ever important to know customer needs and to develop tailored products and services. Efficiency and effectiveness of innovation activities hereby largely depend on access to relevant information on needs and solutions.

A successful way to gather such information is to open up internal innovation processes for external input of knowledge and know-how. Open Innovation stands for such a procedure where external sources of innovation such as customers, rival companies and academic institutions are integrated into the company's innovation process.

Within the OpenAlps project nine partners from five European countries pursue the overall aim to support small and medium

sized enterprises (SMEs) of the Alpine Space on their way from internal, closed innovation to Open Innovation. For this purpose the following services are, amongst others, offered to SMEs:

- A multilingual, web-based Open Innovation platform for innovation seekers and providers ([www.alpine-open-innovation.eu](http://www.alpine-open-innovation.eu));
- Open Innovation forum to match seekers and providers personally and to disseminate and exchange Open Innovation knowledge and experience;
- Open Innovation labs consisting of SMEs, researchers and developers (R&Ds);
- Open Innovation management trainings to qualify SMEs, R&Ds, cluster managers and business development agencies.

OpenAlps is part of the EU Alpine Space Programme and is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and the participating states.





## COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS' CONFERENCES, COLLECTION OF GOOD PRACTICE AND MID-TERM ASSESSMENT OF EUROPE 2020

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In 2012 and 2013, the Committee of the Regions organises a series of conferences – one for each of the seven Flagship Initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy – under the heading “Regions and cities supporting Europe’s growth strategy”. The series culminates in the 6<sup>th</sup> European Summit of Regions and Cities in spring 2014 and the mid-term assessment of the Europe 2020 strategy from the perspective of the CoR.

The conferences on the Flagship Initiatives are developed together with the European Parliament, the European Commission and stakeholders from cities and regions. European associations are invited to contribute to events according to their interest in the topics. The conferences are targeted at representatives from regional and local authorities, EU institutions, private and financial institutions, social partners and civil society.

The conferences will be accompanied by a thematic exhibition of good practice cases from regions and cities, the Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform, the European institutions, the European associations and other stakeholders. In spring 2014, a selection of good practice covering the different Flagship Initiatives will be shown in Brussels. All local and regional authorities will have a possibility to assess all Flagship Initiatives by participating in thematic surveys. Also, in the two and a half coming years the CoR Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform will continue to monitor the Europe 2020 policy cycle – looking at how multi-level governance is implemented.

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- **Youth on the move:** 13 December 2012, Brussels;
- **An agenda for new skills and jobs:** 28 February/1 March 2013, Dublin;
- **An industrial policy for the globalisation era:** 10 April 2013, Brussels
- **European platform against poverty:** 29 May 2013, Brussels
- **Digital agenda for Europe:** 2 July 2013, Brussels
- **Resource efficient Europe:** 5/6 September 2013, Vilnius
- **Innovation Union:** 27 November 2013, Brussels