

Annex

Overview of good practices transferred



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1 Methodology of creating a regional innovation system for linking business development with the healthcare and welfare sector on a structural basis

Originating region: Province Noord-Brabant

Destination Region: Tartu, Estonia

Description of good practice and methodology of transfer

With support of ERDF funds Noord-Brabant developed a Regional Innovative Actions Programme “Innovative solutions for an ageing population”. The programme aimed at linking business and health care institutions in the fields of the ageing population and chronic diseases. The cultural differences between entrepreneurs and health care institutions have been one of the difficulties addressed during the implementation of the programme. In order to succeed, critical mass is required and many get together events. Also a strong commitment of main stakeholders (regional authority, hospitals, businesses, care institutions) is very important. The importance of the programme is not only that financial support is given to new product/service development, but also a shared vision is created about where the region wants to be in the future.

A presentation was given and a video was shown about the Noord-Brabant approach during a High Level Advisory Group meeting of I4W in Milan. This video was presented and discussed by regional stakeholders in Estonia. Based on these discussions additional information on paper (i.e. evaluation reports) about the Noord-Brabant system has been transferred to the Tartu City Council.

Based on specific questions a study visit was organized by the Province of Noord-Brabant, the Noord-Brabant Development Agency and Tartu Science Park, which took place on June 7-9, 2011. The Estonian delegation consisted of 11 experts coming both from private and public sector active in the field of healthcare. The aim of the visit was to learn more in-depth how Noord-Brabant region has supported innovation and business development in health industries on a structural basis.

The study visit programme included both presentations with roundtable discussions and visits to local innovative healthcare-related institutions.

Evidence of success

The study visit supported the understanding of the Estonian delegation that the source of a successful structural and sustainable innovation approach is bringing different actors (in this case businesses and health care institutions) together in a programmatic structure, not only focusing on concrete developments, but also on bridging cultural gaps, creating critical mass and finding ways to turn pilots into sustainable business cases.

For Tartu as a University City and centre of medicine in Estonia this methodology is acknowledged as a very important direction for the development of the healthcare related innovation system in Tartu and in Estonia as a whole.

The results of the study visit are currently analysed in Estonia and especially in Tartu region from the feasibility and everyday implementation point of view and will be translated to an improved approach within the Tartu/Estonian innovation system.

2 Setting up Healthcare Cluster

Originating region: Upper Austria

Destination Region: Tartu, Estonia

Description of good practice and methodology of transfer

For several years Tartu region has been looking for methods and tools how to increase the competitiveness of certain key economic sectors in the region and innovation capacity and internationalization of the companies in those sectors. Cluster development and creation of cluster initiatives have been identified as an approach which would allow the region to address those challenges and provide a suitable operational framework for implementing appropriate support actions for achieving the strategic development goals of the region.

In order to identify existing good practices in cluster development in other European regions a mapping of existing cluster programmes across Europe was carried out and Clusterland in Upper Austria was identified as one of the most successful regional cluster development programmes in Europe. In order to familiarize the regional stakeholders with the strategic aims and operational principles of Clusterland a study visit was organized to Linz. This study visit was of decisive importance to reach the consensus and come to the decision that health-related cluster initiatives have also to be set up in Estonia and the existing good practice from Clusterland should be adapted for the development of cluster initiatives.

In particular the funding model of Clusterland was transferred by adapting the principles that in the creation phase of the cluster the public sector support should be of high proportion of the total costs and is normally expected to be more than 50% and sometimes up to 90% of the total funding of cluster activities, whereas in the next development phases of the cluster initiatives the public sector support would decrease in some case to only 10% and private sector funding increase respectively.

Evidence of success

Based on the Clusterland good practice principles Estonian HealthTech Cluster was launched in Spring 2011 following the basic funding model of the Clusterland where the public sector support for the cluster for the first 3 years is expected to be 70%. After the initial first 3 years the public support for the cluster will decrease and will be linked to specific projects. In terms of the focus of cluster activities also the key development priorities of Clusterland were taken over by the HealthTech Cluster, namely – increase of internationalization, competitiveness and innovation capacity of cluster companies combined with support for regional networking. In that sense the Clusterland model has been successfully adapted to Estonian context and situation and key principles used for defining the scope and focus of cluster activities.

3 Innovation in rehabilitation techniques

Originating region: Lombardy

Destination Region: Noord-Brabant

Description of good practice and methodology of transfer

The Department of Computer Science of the Università degli Studi di Milano is devoted to both theoretical and applied research in Information Technology. Rehabilitation with virtual reality has been explored by the Laboratory of Applied Intelligent Systems (AIS-Lab) since late 1900 with scientific research on the neural mechanisms elicited. But it is only with the recent technological development that ICT has become viable for effective treatment in this area. A strong effort has been put in the last year to develop rehabilitation systems at home. This has been strongly pursued in FITREHAB inside which a bidirectional translation research has been activated with clinical partners: Foundation De Wever in Noord-Brabant and Viljiandi Hospital in Estonia. In particular, in Noord-Brabant, the bidirectional approach was based on one side on illustrating technological offer and its possible use and deployment and how this can be used for rehabilitation. On the other side, De Wever has actively participated in clarifying their rehabilitation path and the rehabilitation goals and monitoring procedures.

This approach has produced a fast growing knowledge of the problematic in rehabilitation and on the potentialities of ICT that has allowed moving beyond the state of the art and realizing the FITREHAB project effectively.

Evidence of success

The experience carried out with FITREHAB has allowed AIS-Lab to propose a larger project on the topic of moving rehabilitation at home that was eventually funded and it will start next October, with some of the key partners also involved in the FITHREAB project.

The results have attracted the interest of centers specialized in Rehabilitation. UMIL has started collaboration with Villa Beretta that is the Rehabilitation Department of ValDuce Hospital of Como and with Niguarda neuro-psychological center.

In Noord-Brabant, De Wever is further pursuing the approach of using smart textile for rehabilitation, capitalizing on the experience of FITREHAB that has allowed to better focus on the issues required for production and engineering. In this framework, De Wever has started a new project after the FITREHAB project together with SME's.

This is an example on how a close collaboration between clinicians and ICT researcher in a genuine bi-directional translation research has helped developing a common knowledge that has allowed an advancement of the competence of both parties. And it is an example on how this collaboration can catalyse the participation of other subjects therefore increasing the critical mass and the competences in the research group.

4 Four motors for Europe

Originating region: Catalonia & Lombardy

Destination Region: Baden-Württemberg, Rhône-Alpes and Associates

Description of good practice and methodology of transfer

The Four Motors for Europe is a cooperation agreement between Baden-Württemberg, Catalonia, Lombardy and Rhône-Alpes. Currently there are some Associate regions to the Four Motors. It hinges on the principle of institutional flexibility. Each partner region takes it in turn to occupy the presidency for a one-year period. A Coordinating Committee meets three times a year in order to define and manage the concerted action approved by the Task Force.

In a meeting in Lyon on 20th December 2011, Catalonia and Lombardy, as participants in the INTERREG IVC Project I4W, proposed to involve the Four Motors for Europe and Associates in the experiment of spreading the benefits of the project in the respective territories. It was generally agreed to collaborate in this issue.

Evidence of success

Following actions will take place:

- Mapping from Lombardy and Catalonia will be delivered as an example for Baden-Württemberg, Rhône-Alpes and Flandes.
- A meeting with stakeholders from the different regions will be convened during the first semester of 2012, in order to explore potential collaborations on that field (EU financial schemes). This meeting will be held in Lombardia within the I4W framework.
- A specific event on this field is foreseen to be organised in MEDICA, Düsseldorf, in 2012 or 2013. A great deal of relevant stakeholders and related companies are thought to regularly participate at MEDICA.

5 Euroregion Pyrenees Mediterranean

Originating region: Catalonia

Destination Regions: Balearic Islands, Aragon, Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées

Description of good practice and methodology of transfer

The Euroregion was created on 2004 as a politic cooperation project between Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, Aragon, Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées. Its main goal is to create a hub for sustainable development in the northwest of the Mediterranean based on the innovation and social and economic integration of the territory (website: www.euroregio.eu).

Based on the positive experience of I4W, the participants of the Euroregion organized a seminar with the aim of the seminar is to define a roadmap to study the possibilities for working together on European projects, becoming a competitive cluster at a European level. Participants of subprojects FITREHAB and MNEMOSYNE participated in the event together with ACC1Ó. The event was structured in three round tables:

- ICT as a tool for the change of the health system.
- Competitiveness of biotechnology and health in the Euro-region.
- The technological innovation for people's welfare.

Evidence of success

Following actions will take place:

- Identify and connect the stakeholders in every region to work in the technological innovation focused on welfare.
- Exchange of good practices among the regions and define expertise on welfare.
- Partners search: define priorities and objectives for the interregional cooperation.
- Detect the opportunities on European Projects.
- Economic and business development around the technological innovation for welfare.