

# PROMOTION OF INNOVATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES





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# INTRODUCTION

The South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme (SEE Programme) aims to develop transnational partnerships on matters of strategic importance, in order to improve the territorial, economic and social integration process and to contribute to cohesion, stability and competitiveness of the region. The SEE Programme helps to promote better integration between EU Member States, candidate and potential candidate countries as well as neighbouring countries. Regional cooperation in South East Europe is essential, regardless of the different stage of integration of the various countries. Stability, prosperity and security of the region are of significant interest to the European Union.

AsviLoc plus (**A**gencies **S**upporting **V**alue of **I**nnovation systems in regional and **l**ocal economies) is a project designed within the SEE-framework to foster a balanced territorial development and territorial integration within the cooperation area. The project supports programme priority axis 1 »Facilitation of innovation and entrepreneurship«, specifically area of intervention 1.3 »Enhance the framework conditions and pave the way for innovation« aiming at setting up exchange and coordination mechanisms for research, technology and innovation approaches and policies (governance aspect) and to increase public awareness on the importance of technological progress by transnational actions in the area.

Strengthening the capacity of institutions and of the society for innovation is a critical component of overall innovation performance. AsviLoc plus contributes to a more innovation friendly economic environment of the involved regions, setting up a virtuous circle at regional level where supply of new ideas and demand for new solutions both push and pull innovation.

The partners collaborating within the AsviLoc plus project are Regional Development and Innovation Agencies of

several SEE Regions. A short presentation of the AsviLoc plus partners can be found on the final pages of this catalogue. The networking activities of the development agencies involved allow an on-going exchange of information and good practice.

This catalogue contains several good practice examples implemented by the AsviLoc plus partners showing possibilities and opportunities to »enhance the frame work conditions and pave the way for innovation«. The examples cover a wide range of thematic and geographical activities such as the setting up of a specialized eco-food zone, the establishment of new clusters, the use of specific software for analysing customer demand, the promotion of innovation cooperation and business foundations through specific financing schemes or the creation of a platform for the valorisation of research results. Roughly, the good practice examples can be grouped into the following five categories: Innovation Governance, Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Clusters/Cooperative Networks, Access to Finance as well as Training and Awareness Measures.

The capacity of development agencies to turn knowledge, skills and competencies into sustainable competitive advantage is crucial to the regions' economic performance. The know how gained in the course of the study visits and the staff exchange programme among the AsviLoc plus partners already lead to first practical measures e.g. concerning the setting up of clusters or the establishment of cooperation initiatives between ministries and regional development agencies to promote innovation. The examples presented in this catalogue should be an inspiration for all EU Member States as well as candidate or potential candidate countries to develop activities towards an enhanced innovation and thus economic performance.

# ASVIL





# INNOVATION THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING

## Institution, Country

Marche Region, Italy

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** F.A.R.O. Lab – Training, Animation, Research for the setting up of an Observatory on lifelong learning. (Formazione, Animazione, Ricerca, per la costituzione di un Osservatorio sulla Formazione Continua)

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The main objective of the F.A.R.O. Lab project is to support the actors involved in lifelong learning/adult education with regard to the promotion and definition of suitable and innovative training tools and models, as the quality of education and know-how of employees is crucial for the innovation potential of companies and thus for economic growth of the region. Furthermore, the project aims at creating the best conditions to favor the integration of the different financial sources (ESF, Interprofessional Funds, national funds) dedicated to the lifelong learning processes in the Marche region territory.

## Target Group

The target group consists of stakeholders involved in the regional lifelong learning/adult education process such as managers, public servants, entrepreneurs, officers of the region and trade unions as well as representatives from regional interprofessional fund.

## Brief description of Activity

The F.A.R.O. Lab project is implemented in order to strengthen a knowledge based regional sustainable economy. The project covers two kinds of activities:

### 1. Training Laboratory

- Training seminars realized in the five Provinces of the Marche Region addressed to 20 participants for 4.000 training hours focused on: territorial/sectorial/business training plans, productive territorial systems, lifelong learning with regard to collective contracting, lifelong learning and work organization, monitoring and evaluation of lifelong learning;
- Promotion and realization of five sectorial/territorial plans, related to specific topics of interest such as wood/furniture, mechanics, fashion/shoes and agro-food as informative basis for the following training programs;
- Promotion and realization of 30 business plans and 30 trade union agreements;

### 2. Regional Observatory for lifelong learning/ adult education:

- Establishment of a knowledge framework on the actions with regard to lifelong learning having an impact on the regional territory;
- Realization of a specific survey on lifelong learning demand and supply characteristics in the Marche Region and identification of educational needs;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

A key factor of success is the monitoring and evaluating system of the program based on qualitative and quantitative indicators that allows a constant checking of all the project's phases both in terms of management and in terms of contents.

## For more information:

[www.istruzioneformazioneilavoro.marche.it/  
SistemaRegionaleFormazione/farolab.asp](http://www.istruzioneformazioneilavoro.marche.it/SistemaRegionaleFormazione/farolab.asp)



# TURN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS INTO REAL BENEFITS

## Institution, Country

North-East Regional Development Agency (NE RDA), Romania

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Partnership Union of Innovation

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The most important objectives of this Partnership are:

- to create a partnership on innovation in order to enhance economic support through innovation and transfer of knowledge and technologies;
- to increase the capacity of innovation promotion, research, technology transfer and competitiveness within the policy for regional development through interconnecting knowledge, structures and persons;

## Target Group

The Partnership includes all relevant organisations which support innovation, both at regional and national level:

- Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports - National Authority for Scientific Research (ANCS)
  - Directorate for Technological Transfer, Innovation and Infrastructure
  - General Directorate Intermediary Body for Research, Development and Innovation
- Romanian Association for Technological Transfer and Innovation (ARoTT)
- Regional development agencies from the 8 development regions
- Ministry of Economy, Trade and Business Environment
  - Directorate for Industrial Policies
- National Agency for Implementation of Programs and Projects for SMEs (AIPPIMM)
- State Office for Inventions and Trademarks (OSIM)

## Brief description of Activity

The specific activities envisaged by the members of the partnership are:

- defining a common framework to reach convergent results, incl. the elaboration, promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the research and innovation policy, of industrial policies (with regard to clusters, export, attracting FDI), the policy for the development of SMEs at national and regional level as well as the distribution of responsibilities within the overall innovations system;
- enhancing the regional administrative capacities through technical assistance programs and training;
- defining financial support programs dedicated to innovation, to the development of SME sector and to increase industrial competitiveness and to the implementation mechanisms (eventually decentralized);
- integrating growth objectives concerning innovation and technology transfer capacities into regional policy;
- elaborating studies and regional strategies concerning a sustainable and innovative economic development for the justification of plans and financing programs dedicated to regional development;
- creating regional databases with information on supply and demand regarding technologies including information on patented solutions and actors in this field as well as general information on the main characteristics of the regional SMEs structure, etc.;
- elaborating and implementing strategies and regional communication plans with the purpose of promoting innovation, disseminating technological information, best practices examples, etc.;
- supporting regional, national and international players and partnerships in the elaboration of projects with regional impact;

## Key factors of success/key difficulties in practice

The elements of success for this collaboration between main actors related to innovation, at regional and national level will be tested during the preparation of implementation documents for the next programming period 2014-2020 that is starting in June 2012. At the same time RDA North-East and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Business Environment will start working together on cluster policy development, with the support of the CLUSTER Poli SEE Project that was recently approved. RDA was a promoter of this national initiative and the risk is to end this activity without having a regional or decentralized approach for the future industrial policy in Romania.

## For more information:

[www.adrnordest.ro](http://www.adrnordest.ro)





# A REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

## Institution, Country

Authorities of East Macedonia & Thrace (EMTh) Region, in partnership with the main local and regional actors concerned, Greece

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Regional Innovation Technology Transfer Strategy (RITTS)

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The major objectives of the programme are:

- to build regional consensus and create awareness on innovation
- to identify expressed and latent needs of regional firms to analyse and assess the regional supply in terms of innovation, research and technology resources and the technology transfer and support infrastructure
- to improve the efficiency of Structural Funds Operational Programmes for the Community Support Framework

## Target Group

The regional innovation technology transfer strategy (RITTS) is addressed to a wide range of stakeholders and beneficiaries: amongst others to local, regional and national authorities, regional SMEs and large companies, research and intermediary organisations, universities, science parks, technology brokers, training organisations, development agencies, banks and industrial associations.

## Brief description of Activity

The main outcome of the RITTS EMTh was the elaboration of a concrete Action Plan for Innovation and Technology Transfer. This action plan contributes to peace and development initiatives of the EMTh region, enhances transregional co-operation and inter-firm collaboration for innovation, supports the decision making procedures and improves the efficiency of the Regional Operation Programme. The RITTS EMTh project was an opportunity and a challenge for the authorities of the EMTh Region, in partnership with the main local and regional actors concerned, to develop a specific and concrete set of actions for Innovation and Technology Transfer, based on common understanding and consensus, through open public dialogue.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success are to

- increase the regional budget for innovation
- optimise the regional supply and support infrastructure
- increase inter-firm collaboration for innovation
- create a Regional Innovation Observatory
- promote trans-regional co-operation

## For more information:

[www.tee.gr/teeassoc/urban/teeam/activit/europrog/ritts.htm](http://www.tee.gr/teeassoc/urban/teeam/activit/europrog/ritts.htm)

# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPECIALIZATION

## Institution, Country

Regional Development Agency Hrast Ltd (HRAST), Croatia

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Specialized Business Zone for Agriculture and Food Processing – ECO Zone

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The idea behind this innovative activity is to use the advantage of clean and unpolluted land (mainly demined) as a specialized agro-business zone for the exclusive production and processing of eco food. The creation of this eco zone is based on the following objectives:

- Increasing significantly the regional competence of the agro sector;
- Attracting foreign investors to invest and work at the land and premises of the Business Zone;
- Changing positively the attitude of local eco-food farmers and producers;
- Improving skills and knowledge of local producers through intensive training courses and know-how transfer;
- Creating added value due to better usage of land;
- Creating employment and raising per capita income of the area;

## Target Group

The target group consists of local producers involved in the production and processing of eco food and/or products based on eco food and potential foreign investors involved in this specific field of business.

## Brief description of Activity

The overall measure consists of the following activities:

### (a) Preparatory Activities:

- Preparation of technical documentation
- Analysis of criteria for potential beneficiaries and investors Definition of terms and ways of doing business within the Business Zone (land usage, usage of premises, types of production)
- Definition and formation of legal form and management structure of the Business Zone

### (b) Organizational and structural activities

- Formation of relevant interest groups taking into account the interests of different production types and groups (e.g. basic agriculture producers, processing companies)
- Provision of specialized trainings, skills and knowledge transfer concerning business management and entrepreneurship
- Support for raising financial resources for Business Zone premises
- Negotiation and definition of terms and conditions of loans for beneficiaries and users of the Business zone

### (c) Implementation Activities

- Business Zone management and RDA HRAST will support local farmers and local and foreign companies to overcome possibly critical competence gaps, especially regarding the lack of management skills.

## For more information:

[www.ar-hrast.hr](http://www.ar-hrast.hr)



# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TERRITORIAL PACT

## Institution, Country

Consortium for Development of Polesine (CONSVIPO), Italy

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Territorial Pact

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The aim of the Territorial Pact is to reach voluntary agreements between public and private bodies in order to foster regional development and to achieve economic growth. In addition, the Pact supports the development of the territorial identity by stimulating proactive networking between all relevant stakeholders and by arranging agreements to tackle the challenges faced by the region. Furthermore, the Territorial Pact aims to attract new enterprises and investors and to obtain greater financial credit with regard to regional, national and European institutions.

All in all, the Pact covers many issues, all of them being mutually integrated, such as: industrial and agro-industrial policies, policies concerning tourism, services, agriculture and fishery as well as territorial and infrastructural policies.

## Target Group

The actors involved are: Veneto Region, 50 municipalities, Province of Rovigo, House of Commerce of Rovigo, handicraft associations, trade unions, several companies, banks and bodies that represent the main economic and social stakeholders in the area of Rovigo.

## Brief description of Activity

The thematic issues addressed by the Territorial Pact cover topics such as

- support and reinforcement of the local economy through information about the financial opportunities offered by regional, national and European actors aimed at public and private initiatives;
- recognition of the main goals regarding the development of the territory;
- establishment of a permanent local cooperation and partnership network;
- promotion and monitoring of sustainable development programmes and processes;
- support initiatives regarding the promotion of equal opportunities;
- recognition of relevant initiatives on a municipal as well as sub-regional basis;

The process is technically supported by CONSVIPO.

In the context of the Territorial Pact it was possible:


- to finance 75 enterprises for an amount of 25,472,788 Euro;
- to create 642 jobs;
- to finance 10 infrastructure projects for an amount of 13,610,630 Euro;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

The Territorial Pact of the Rovigo area is the first agreement of this type signed in the North of Italy. It has a high innovative impact as it represents an 'arena' where public and private local actors have the opportunity to directly present their points of view and recommendations. Key success factors for the implementation of the Pact were the human and financial resources that permitted to perform a large variety of activities and programmes.

## For more information:

[www.consvipo.it](http://www.consvipo.it)



# NEGOTIATING FOR INNOVATION

## Institution, Country

South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency  
Nonprofit Ltd, Hungary

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Cooperation of Regional Innovation Institutions

**Category:** Innovation Governance

## General Objectives

The main goal of this initiative is to create a leading negotiating body that links the stakeholders of the region relevant for innovation. The negotiating body should serve as a platform for the development of a common objective and common vision in the area of innovation for the next years.

## Target Group

Innovative stakeholders of the region such as SMEs, clusters, knowledge transfer centers and research institutions;

## Brief description of Activity

Currently, the legislation and the related institutional structure of the regional innovation's system are changing. Though according to the statistics of the last 10 years, there is a significant growth in R&D personnel as well as resources spent, the improvement was slower in the South Transdanubian Region than in any other part of the country.

The region is facing serious challenges regarding innovation. Apart from the increased funds for supporting clusters, there are no decentralized funds directed to the region. Also, the lack of forums, where decision makers, experts, and business actors can discuss their opinions, ideas, and plans is one of the obstacles to success. Cooperation and partnerships are therefore crucial to the development of the region.

The challenges faced by the region can be influenced by continuous well-aimed lobbying towards the government based on statistical data concerning innovation and the innovation strategy developed by the partners represented in the negotiating body, such as regional companies and conglomerates that have a leading position in innovation and R&D.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success will be:

- regular meetings of the negotiating body offering a platform to present and discuss good practices and recommendations;
- the development of a regional innovation strategy focusing on the next planning period;
- a common act promoting and strengthening innovational culture;

**For more information:**

[www.ddriu.hu](http://www.ddriu.hu)

# INNOVATION FOR QUALITY OF LIFE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

## Institution, Country

Central Directorate for Health, Social Health Integration and Social Policies, Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, Italy

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Regional Laboratory on Accessibility, Domotics and Quality of Life

**Category:** Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

## General Objectives

The activity aims at:

- developing a regional platform integrating relevant initiatives about domotics, innovation, accessibility and housing facilitation for an improved quality of life at home for elderly and people with disabilities;
- sharing knowledge and information to disseminate ICT solutions for independent living and active ageing;
- developing modalities of involvement of public and private entities able to enhance interventions in favor of the social inclusion of population at risk of marginalization;

## Target Group

The target group consists of ICT and research centers, market-oriented companies and public administrations that want to integrate their ideas, policies and practices into a regional strategy for innovation and social inclusion. Final beneficiaries are mainly the elderly and people with disabilities.

## Brief description of Activity

The Laboratory started as a project and is now officially established by a Regional Act (FVG Region Health and Social Services Regional Plan 2010-2012, through the Local Health Agency n.5 that acts on Region's authority with its Operational Plan 2011).

Dedicated to the development of home living, domotics and accessibility, the Laboratory intervenes on:

- Housing and living environments
- ICT solutions
- Social innovation (Public Private Partnerships – PPP and community development)

The draft of the regional agreement for partnership supporting the regional Lab is about to be finalized in coherence with the EIP – European Innovation Partnership included in the European 2020 Strategy, aiming at strengthening public private networks able to facilitate the implementation of national and regional strategies.

Moreover, the Laboratory supports the internationalization of regional policies on health and social inclusion (networks, participation in fairs and international workshops, project proposals, etc.).

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Within this context, the Regional Directorate strengthened collaboration with the Regional Council of Associations for Disabled Persons in order to develop initiatives for the promotion of accessibility of daily life spaces. It also enabled the development of an instrument for measuring the accessibility level of environments and spaces, based upon the right of the individual and the inclusive project approach of Universal Design in coherence with the WHO's ICF – International Classification of Functioning and Disabilities. Public administrative procedures, involvement of private companies, practical integration of different policy sectors can be considered difficulties to be addressed.

## For more information:

[giulio.antonini@welfare.fvg.it](mailto:giulio.antonini@welfare.fvg.it)

# STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION BY USING CRM SOFTWARE

## Institution, Country

Consortium for Development of Polesine (CONSVIPO) and Sviluppo Marche SpA (SVIM), RDA of Marche, Italy

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** The V-TIGER CRM Software to support organizational innovation

**Category:** Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

## General Objectives

The V-TIGER CRM (Customer Relationship Management) Software is a technological tool that supports companies in managing their customer relations by processing and analysing market data and information. By understanding customer drivers and customer profitability CRM provides companies with the possibility to tailor their products and services to maximize the overall value of their customer portfolio. The establishment of a proactive approach towards the customer and the optimization of the relationship with the customer will facilitate higher customer loyalty and a long-lasting mutually beneficial relationship.

## Target Group

The target group consists of SMEs located in Marche Region and province of Rovigo and operating in the industrial or services sector. Moreover, since the CRM tool is suitable for public organizations too, trade associations and similar organisations become potential users and were thus involved in the presentation of the V-TIGER CRM.

## Brief description of Activity

In a first phase, the V-TIGER CRM software was tested by several enterprises as a pilot action of the AsviLoc plus project to support organizational innovation in Marche Region and Rovigo Province. Based on the analysis of this pilot phase the software has been further developed to cover the needs of the targeted SMEs in the best way possible.

In detail, the software was successfully adopted by two SMEs in Marche Region and eight SMEs in the Province of Rovigo. The V-TIGER CRM tool consists of several modules covering thematic fields such as marketing, sales, support, inventory, and project management functions.

The main features of the software are: sales automation, control support, marketing automation, inventory management, support for multiple database systems, security control, product customization, integrated calendar, integration with email service and add-ons (plug-in for Outlook, MS Office, Thunderbird, customers portal and web forms). Due to recent advances in enterprise software technology companies can use CRM with a low level of investments necessary. The enterprises installing the V-TIGER CRM tool receive trainings and a customization of the software according to the requested needs.

The coordination of the CRM project and its development within companies has been followed by personnel from the University of Marche and CONSVIPO as well as by experts from Veneto.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

The testing of the V-TIGER CRM tool during the pilot phase was an important factor of success, since the development of the software could be based on needs that came up in practice. Almost all of the involved SMEs adopted the ICT tool as a management tool after this pilot phase. The CRM project can be considered as the starting point for the diffusion of marketing philosophy among the SMEs of Marche Region and Rovigo Province. As the software offers a complete and comprehensive set of tools for all types of customer related tasks, it has created competitive advantages for the SMEs involved.

## For more information:

[www.asvilocplus.eu](http://www.asvilocplus.eu)  
[crm.asvilocplus.eu](http://crm.asvilocplus.eu)

# YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS TO BOOST INNOVATIONS

## Institution, Country

Varna Economic Development Agency (VEDA), Bulgaria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Web-based group

»Innovation and Entrepreneurship«

**Category:** Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

## General Objectives

The main objective of this activity is the setting up of a web-based thematic group involving young entrepreneurs and innovators in order to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the region of Varna and other parts of the country.

More specifically, the initiative aims at:

- creating a platform for knowledge sharing, communication and networking among people interested in issues concerning innovation and entrepreneurship;
- providing up-to-date information on funding possibilities for the implementation of innovative projects and ideas as well as for training and scholarships aimed at innovative capacity building of human resources;
- taking advantage from an innovative ICT application with regard to the dissemination of information regarding EU financial support and project implementation, for better visibility and transparency;

## Target Group

All types of stakeholders, who are involved and interested in innovation system development and entrepreneurship, such as representatives of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), professors and researchers of universities, self-employed persons, business oriented non-profit organizations, local self-government organizations and ministries.

## Brief description of Activity

The initiative comprises the following activities:

**(a)** identifying and establishing a creative environment that allows people interested in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship to learn from each other by sharing knowledge, experience, and information;

**(b)** promoting the initiative and attracting people to the group who participate and frequently use social networks for communication and exchange of information (including people with hearing disabilities);

**(c)** group management including general support and dissemination of updated information on innovation, training and financing issues relevant to young high-tech companies and innovative products (to overcome the lack of management skills and financing);

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

A crucial factor of success was the right choice of personnel creating and facilitating the web-based group. In this regard VEDA appointed a young and adequate person to implement the project. Initially, group members were recruited among young people who want to enhance their competencies in the area of innovation and access to finance. In the course of one year the number of group members has risen to 341. The people networking on the platform actively post information on upcoming events, trainings, programs, etc. and develop business relations amongst each other.

## For more information:

[www.veda-bg.eu](http://www.veda-bg.eu)

[www.facebook.com/groups/187570071286415](https://www.facebook.com/groups/187570071286415)

# REGIONAL INNOVATION POLE – A POLICY FOR CLUSTERING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

## Institution, Country

Region of Central Macedonia, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and 65 other Stakeholders, Greece

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Regional Innovation Pole of Central Macedonia (RIPCM)

**Category:** Clusters/Cooperative networks

## General Objectives

The implementation of the strategic policy 'Regional Innovation Pole in Central Macedonia (RIPCM)' enabled the cooperation of a big number of enterprises, research organisations and innovation institutions in the formation of the regional innovation ecosystem. The implementation of a strategic policy in a specific sector (ICT) initiated the formation of a permanent mechanism for the support of innovation and innovation culture in the region.

## Target Group

- Researchers and laboratories operating within universities and research centers
- Industry with special emphasis to research performing SMEs in the ICT sector
- Innovation intermediaries (technology transfer organizations)

## Brief description of Activity

To implement the ICT sector related cluster, RIPCM performed four types of instruments and actions:

### (a)

Regional technology platforms: They lead the cooperative approach regarding the selection and application of technologies. Organizations from industry and research, financial

institutions, regulatory authorities, as well as users cooperate to identify both the vision and technologies. Three technological platforms were implemented: (1) Broadband networks and Internet services, (2) Digital systems and telecommunication systems, and (3) Software technologies and knowledge software.

### (b)

New product development: Consortia bring together ICT companies, end-user companies and technology providers from universities and research centers. Each consortium addresses the making of an innovative product or service. Following an open call and double assessment, 14 consortia were selected out of 70 proposals submitted (by taking into account: the strategic importance of the proposed technology application that the consortium intended to develop; the clear evidence of the usefulness and viability of the new product or service; the clear evidence of consortium partners regarding long-term commitment for cooperation; and the effort to place the new product or service on the market).

### (c)

Creation of spin-off companies and commercialization of research results: Foundation of new high-tech enterprises is a challenge to entrepreneurial and empowerment strategies per se. Collaborative networking, esp. cooperation between R&D labs and motivated people having the necessary skills to set and run a new business is crucial to be successful. The creation of 5 spin-offs was supported through the RIPCM policy implementation.

### (d)

Horizontal activities: Awareness and support activities help to create wider cooperation networks involving all actors related to ICTs. They offer a wide range of innovation support services (technology transfer, international cooperation, market promotion, etc.) to all organizations comprising the ICT innovation system.

## Key factors of success/key difficulties in practice

Through the implementation of RIPCM specific results were achieved including the development of 14 new products (most of them are now on the market), the creation of 5 spin-off companies and the establishment of 3 technology platforms. The most significant output, however, was the cooperation of a big number of enterprises, research organizations and innovation institutions in the formation of the regional innovation ecosystem.

## For more information:

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



# EXPLORING THE MARKET POTENTIAL OF RESEARCH RESULTS

## Institution, Country

Urenio Laboratory of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/ South East European Research Center, Greece

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Inter-regional Cooperation for Valorisation of Research Results (INTERVALUE)

**Category:** Clusters/Cooperative networks

## General Objectives

Valorisation of research results with the aim of transferring promising R&D results into commercial products is one of the major challenges of economic development in South East Europe. The main goal of INTERVALUE is to develop an organizational framework and a methodological toolkit that tackles the valorisation of research results performed in the region's universities and research centres. For gaining practical experience this framework is tested in cooperation with approx. 50 universities and research centres from 8 countries in South East Europe.

## Target Group

- Researchers and laboratories operating within universities and research centres
- Industry with special emphasis to research performing SMEs
- Innovation funding institutions (VCs, business angels)

## Brief description of Activity

INTERVALUE supports the university – industry interaction through:

- development of a R&D repository containing R&D results from more than 50 academic institutions
- development of a mechanism for the preparation of

valorisation plans, based on the analysis of technical feasibility, intellectual property, market and funding potential

- online cooperation platform, the INTERVALUE Platform
- Learning web space which includes online learning roadmaps regarding
  - IPR Management (in seven languages) and
  - New Product Development (stages: idea generation, business case, commercialisation, product launch)
- promotion of promising valorisation plans in Brokerage Events, with the participation of potential investors
- support concerning the realisation of valorisation agreements for selected R&D results

The INTERVALUE Platform has three principal components:

- The R&D Repository Space: for submission of R&D outcomes, related to new products, production processes and services.
- The Valorisation Space: A network of experts helps researchers to create valorisation plans for their R&D results covering technical feasibility, IP protection and market and funding potential.
- The IP Agreements Space: Promotion of R&D results and valorisation plans to selected markets and brokerage events in view of achieving commercialisation agreements, like new contracts, licenses or equity.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success are the support at the institutional level, including intermediary mechanisms (i.e. liaison offices) within the academic institutions; the building of trust between researchers and entrepreneurs; pre-existence of ad hoc networks; openness and risk taking spirit from both sides (research and business).

Difficulties experienced include the hesitation of researchers to reveal details of their research outcomes in fear of IPR violation; researchers' ignorance regarding business and marketing issues; lack of a concrete and visible IPR strategy at the level of academic institutions; inadequacy of VC funding available; lack of an innovation oriented strategy of the industry and especially of SMEs that will enable them to take advantage of potentially commercially viable research results.

## For more information:

[www.urenio.org/intervalue](http://www.urenio.org/intervalue)  
[researchvalue.net](http://researchvalue.net)

# LEAF COMMUNITY: ECO-SUSTAINABILITY, NEW LIFESTYLES AND ENERGY INNOVATION

## Institution, Country

Loccioni/Marche Region, Italy

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** The Leaf Community

**Category:** Clusters/Cooperative networks

## General Objectives

The Leaf Community is the result of the strong ambition to create a positive interaction field between technology and nature. The idea was developed by the Loccioni Group, which in collaboration with a network of specialized companies, defined and created the first eco-sustainable community in Italy. In the Leaf Community it is possible to live in a zero carbon house, move in an ecosustainable way, bring children to a solar energy school and work in eco-compatible buildings. The Leaf community is one among the first energetically independent communities, where energy is entirely provided by renewable resources. Moreover, the Leaf Community is one of the first examples of virtual power plants.

## Target Group

Both, companies and consumers are »beneficiaries« due to the ongoing knowledge creation of the Leaf Community in ecosustainable issues on the one hand and the possibility to live in a community granting the highest level of comfort and modernity on the other hand.

## Brief description of Activity

The Leaf Community is an open laboratory and an opportunity for different stakeholders (institutions, universities, municipalities, companies and schools) to exchange ideas and to conduct research concerning eco-sustainability, new lifestyles and energy innovation. The Leaf House, composed of six flats, is the hearth of the Leaf Community. It is a carbon neutral house, as energy is entirely produced by renewable sources without CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Its characteristics are cheapness, simplicity, efficiency and silence.

More in particular the Leaf Community provides:

- a visitable laboratory of sustainability and innovation, technologies and new lifestyles at disposal of any public and private organization and of the entire community;
- a laboratory for research projects on energy and sociological issues, for studying and analysing energy consumption, economical impact and new life style;
- a model for energy revamping of existing buildings and for designing new zero emission buildings (both, civil and industrial);
- a smart grid and a possibility for the development of energy data accumulation, communication and monitoring systems;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

The Leaf project has resulted in:

- the creation of new jobs and business opportunities to develop new technologies in this field;
- the reduction of the growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;
- the creation of a new way of measuring energy efficiency (the data of the Leaf House is studied by the International Energy Agency in order to determine, at an international level, the parameters to define a carbon neutral building and identify the new instruments to apply);
- several international scientific publications such as a case study published in the journal Industrial Marketing Management in 2011;
- thousands of business people visiting the Leaf House and the whole Leaf Community;

## For more information:

[www.loccioni.com](http://www.loccioni.com)

[energy.loccioni.com](http://energy.loccioni.com)



# INNOVATION THROUGH COOPERATION

## Institution, Country

ecoplus. The Business Agency of Lower Austria Ltd., Austria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Cluster Program Lower Austria

**Category:** Clusters/Cooperative networks

## General Objectives

Lower Austria's economy is dominated by small and medium sized companies sharing the difficulties of many SMEs: scarcity of resources to engage in research, development and innovation and a lacking access to R&D or education institutions. The Lower Austrian cluster initiatives help bridging these gaps by linking SMEs with research institutions and universities but also with innovative large companies. The main goal is to initiate collaborative projects for joint product/service development or qualification activities in order to increase innovation capabilities and competitiveness of SMEs. By building on existing strengths, analysing the competences of companies, trend scouting and creating critical mass the clusters help to develop new technologies and applications, e.g. developing bio-plastics with the traditionally strong plastics industry in Lower Austria. The cluster initiatives therefore also substantially contribute to the objectives of regional smart specialization.

## Target Group

The target group consists of innovative companies, mainly SMEs but also large companies, in the currently 5 cluster themes covering the region's economic fields of strength: Green Building, Plastics, Mechatronics, Food and Logistics. In total the clusters have currently more than 630 members

of which 528 SMEs, furthermore higher education and R&D institutes working on related topics, as well as associations and other intermediaries. The public sector is represented by the relevant departments of the Regional Government of Lower Austria.

## Brief description of Activity

For each cluster a cluster management team coordinates of all cluster related activities and provides special services for the cluster members.

The cluster management teams provide the following services:

- (a)** Innovation through Cooperation: Initiate, guide and manage R&D-related, collaborative projects; Provide guidance and advice on subsidies, particularly in regard to Lower Austrian cooperation subsidies; Act as interface to funding providers; Help broker cooperation partners; Establish contact to research facilities; Provide stimulus for innovative product development and research projects;
- (b)** Qualification: Sector-specific trainings and professional events with the focus on sector-specific themes; Initiation, guidance and organization of qualification projects; Study trips, trade fair visits;
- (c)** Information: Newsletters, Website, Information events;
- (d)** Public Relations: Topical and project-related press relations, presentations and press conferences; Company and product presentations within the framework of collaborative projects; Presentations at trade fairs;
- (e)** Internationalization: Support for international cooperation – in particular regarding R&D projects and bringing companies together with topic-specific international networks;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

The key factor for success in clusters is to create trust among companies in the cluster, often being competitors. Experience has shown that building trust needs time. »Door openers« can be: less competitive projects at the beginning such as joint qualification; cluster meetings hosted by companies on a rotating basis giving the opportunity to show their sites as well as joint study trips, which often help blending a team; and last but not least a neutral and well accepted, qualified cluster management team.

## For more information:

[www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster](http://www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster)

The Economic Impact of the Lower Austrian Clusters:

[www.ecoplus.at/en/node/14681](http://www.ecoplus.at/en/node/14681) (see downloads)



# BOOSTING COLLABORATION TO STRENGTHEN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

## Institution, Country

North-West Regional Development Agency (NW RDA), Romania

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Creation of a Northern Transylvania Furniture Cluster

**Category:** Clusters/Cooperative networks

## General Objectives

In Romania, cooperation among companies, along with research and academic institutions, public authorities and facilitation organizations is extremely weak as companies are focusing on independence, competition and self-success. But since economic crises on one side and obtaining information of the practical functioning of Western European models of cooperation in the shape of networks and clusters on the other side companies are reshaping their mentality and business models. This change of attitude empowers North-West RDA of Romania to succeed to mobilize a nucleus of companies willing to collaborate within a cooperation framework in the shape of the Northern Transylvania Furniture Cluster. The aim of the cluster is to promote the furniture industry in an innovative way and to develop the sector and its members through collaboration.

## Target Group

The main target group consists of companies acting in the furniture industry in Northern Transylvania, such as producers and distributors of wood, iron and plastic based furniture, producers and providers of accessories and processed materials for the furniture industry as well as technical and design service providers working for the

sector. In addition, the target group comprises universities, professional schools, public authorities, chambers of commerce and consultancy companies.

## Brief description of Activity

The overall initiative consists of the following activities:

- Information and dissemination of the cluster concept and advantages
- Creation of the legal personality - Mobilization of companies and other organizations willing to establish the furniture cluster based on an NGO model
- Development of an Action Plan based on the needs and priorities of the cluster members, e.g. concerning integrated promotion or joint production facilities
- Temporary Management of the cluster with the aim of handing the management over to the involved companies when a certain degree of maturity is reached
- Attraction of new members via further dissemination of information on the cluster
- Establishment of a cluster strategy and identification of future common projects for the cluster development

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

The main key success factors were (a) the presentation of Western European cluster models to the Romanian audience, e.g. during the AsviLoc plus study visit to Austria in 2010 and (b) the fact to start the process of setting up a cluster having first convinced a big company to join the process. This company, regionally well-known acts as a catalyst and generates credibility among business stakeholders who were previously rather against the subject.

The difficulty still lies in the reticence of the companies acting as direct competitors to meet in round tables and then work together in view of individual and joint benefits. Another difficulty is the fact that the cluster model in Romania is not institutionalized, i.e. neither being governed by a piece of legislation nor by a concrete policy direction in this sense. Financial means for the creation and development have not been available at the beginning of the cluster.

**For more information** (Romanian language only):

[www.nord-vest.ro/noutati-adr/INVITATIE-LA-CONSTITUIREA-UNEI-STRUCTURI-ASOCIATIVE-IN-DOMENIUL-PRODUCTIEI-DE-MOBILIER--eID1174.html](http://www.nord-vest.ro/noutati-adr/INVITATIE-LA-CONSTITUIREA-UNEI-STRUCTURI-ASOCIATIVE-IN-DOMENIUL-PRODUCTIEI-DE-MOBILIER--eID1174.html)

[gazeta-afacerilor.ro/2012/04/09/erata](http://gazeta-afacerilor.ro/2012/04/09/erata)

[www.hygia-consult.ro/invitatie](http://www.hygia-consult.ro/invitatie)

# TURN INNOVATIVE VISIONS INTO REAL COMPANIES

## Institution, Country

Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (AWS), Austria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Support Scheme for High-Tech Start-Ups

**Category:** Access to Finance

## General Objectives

The most innovative ideas are only of use to the economy, if they successfully bridge the gap from lab to market. Therefore, AWS is focusing its high-tech funding to support upcoming founders with everything needed to set up a successful new company: sector-specific advice, right financial support and assistance in searching investors.

## Target Group

The target group consists of young high-tech-entrepreneurs, upcoming technological founders as well as students and scientists who want to bring their ideas and research results into the market.

Funding is accessible to all high-tech sectors, in particular to areas with strong potentials regarding growth and innovation: such as life sciences, information and communications technologies (ICT) and physical sciences.

## Brief description of Activity

The overall measure consists of the following 3 separate, mutually linked promotional programs:

### (a) Pre-Seed Program

The Pre-Seed Program addresses to the stage before the high-tech company is set up. Pre-Seed is a financing instrument that enables a potential founder to prepare everything needed for the foundation of his high-tech-enterprise in a professional way: Support for the elaboration of a sound and realizable business concept, for the R&D implementation and start-up costs. Pre-Seed assistance consists of a non-refundable grant of up to 200,000 Euro, paid in installments upon reaching certain milestones within one year.

### (b) Seed-Financing Program

Seed-Financing provides launching assistance for establishing a new company (following Pre-Seed). AWS supports the starting phase of young high-tech companies with up to 1 million Euro, combined with tailored advice and support. Once the young company is making profit or is sold, financial support must be paid back. Customary securities usually needed for bank loans are not necessary. However, the company must be partly and adequately funded through private capital.

### (c) Temporary Management Program

With temporary management, the AWS team supports young high-tech companies supported by the seed-financing program to overcome critical competence gaps (esp. with regard to the lack of management skills) by financing external advice in the areas of finance, sales and technology. Temporary Management assistance consists of a non-refundable support of up to 50% of external consultant costs, limited to 50,000 Euro.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

One key factor of success is the valuation and selection process of the projects which is based on strict economic and technological criteria. Projects must prove high potential for commercialization, high personal commitment and readiness to assume risk, a USP based on high technology and international novelty. The main difficulty is to find private investors and VC for young high-tech companies, especially since the economic crises.

## For more information:

[www.preseed.at](http://www.preseed.at)

[www.seedfinancing.at](http://www.seedfinancing.at)

[www.awsg.at/maz](http://www.awsg.at/maz)



# STRENGTHEN INNOVATION CAPACITY THROUGH COOPERATION

## Institution, Country

Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (AWS), Austria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** ProTrans - Support Scheme for collaborative projects between SMEs and universities/research institutions

**Category:** Access to Finance

## General Objectives

In general, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are still not aware of the importance of pursuing a strategic approach with regard to innovation and product/process development. The aim of ProTrans is to strengthen SME's innovation capacity and ability through practical cooperation based on a concrete R&D-project or technology transfer project. Partners for cooperation may be universities, research institutions (outside universities) or other companies with high technology competence. This very practical approach should help to convince SMEs of the advantages of strategic innovation approaches.

## Target Group

The target group consists of SMEs, operative in manufacturing or industry-related services and realizing projects in the following thematic fields:

- Development and upgrading of company's strategy with regard to optimising product portfolios through using own technological potentials;
- Implementation and establishment of sound innovation management methods with the aim of creating sustainable innovation capacities and abilities;

- Implementation of a strategic approach for generating new products and services related to substantial product and process innovation;

It is essential that the projects are realised in cooperation with universities, research institutions and/or other companies.

## Brief description of Activity

ProTrans assistance is provided as a non-repayable grant. Typically, ProTrans projects are implemented in 2 phases and consequently the assistance is granted in two tranches. The two phases consist of a definition phase supported with up to 50.000 Euro (up to 50% of project costs) and an implementation phase with a maximum assistance of 300.000 Euro (up to 35% of project costs). The overall costs of the project must reach at least 40.000 Euro and projects may not last longer than 2 years (definition phase: max. 8 months).

Eligible costs are

- Staff costs of researchers, technicians and other project related persons;
- Costs for external expertise and consultants;
- Costs for technical feasibility studies as part of the preparatory work for the R&D project;
- Other costs relevant for and directly linked to the project, like expendable materials for R&D activities;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Practical experience shows the importance of concrete criteria for project selection; the main criteria are:

- Quality of project related to its content and regarding formal requirements;
- Relevance of the project for the applicant with respect to the access to latest technologies and integration of them in product development;
- Capacity and ability of applicant and its cooperation partners;
- Economic potential of the project and its future impact for the development of the company;

The main difficulty is still the weak willingness of SMEs to carry out innovative projects in cooperation with others.

## For more information:

[www.awsg.at](http://www.awsg.at)

# CREATIVITY FOR INNOVATION

## Institution, Country

Austria Wirtschaftsservice GmbH (AWS), Austria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Impulse - programme for the support of creative industries and innovation based on creative industries

**Category:** Training and Awareness Measures

## General Objectives

Innovation covers a wide range of aspects. Besides technological innovation, knowledge based and social innovation becomes more and more important for economic growth and job creation. To leverage the enormous economic potential of knowledge based innovation in the field of creative industries, characterised by small scale structured enterprises, AWS launched a set of linked promotional programmes under the name 'impulse'.

impulse aims at

- strengthening companies within the creative industries;
- creating awareness for the economic value of creative work;
- highlighting the innovative power of creative enterprises;
- fostering the integration of creative activities into innovation processes;
- anchoring the role of creative industries as change maker and innovation driver;

## Target Group

The programme targets companies and founders/young entrepreneurs within the creative industries as well as other stakeholders relevant to the creative industries.

## Brief description of Activity

The activities of the overall programme »impulse« are subdivided into three pillars:

### (a) »impulse support«:

grants for innovative projects within the creative industries - one example of a project with regional focus financed by »impulse support« is »OTELO (Open Technology Laboratory)«. OTELO aims at enabling people living in rural areas to experiment in small and cost-free laboratories and develop ideas in areas such as media, (digital) arts or natural sciences.

### (b) »impulse training«:

training for founders and young entrepreneurs in the creative industries on specific topics such as principles of e-commerce, creativity and law (e.g. copyright), etc.;

### (c) »impulse awareness«:

awareness measures such as demonstration of projects funded by impulse and advertising the funding programme;

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success are adequate networking activities among the stakeholders involved in the creative industries scene as well as an appropriate publicity of the programme. The careful selection of the projects funded is both, a key difficulty and a key factor of success. For this purpose, an advanced system of selection criteria is applied with the aid of an external international experts jury taking into account factors such as degree of innovation, value added, market orientation, feasibility of the project idea and relevance and benefit for at least one area of the creative industries.

## For more information:

[www.impulse-awsg.at](http://www.impulse-awsg.at)  
[www.we-workshops.at](http://www.we-workshops.at)  
[www.otelo.or.at](http://www.otelo.or.at)



# HOW TO GET THE EU FUNDING

## Institution, Country

Varna Economic Development Agency (VEDA), Bulgaria

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Capacity Building Seminars in Finance Innovation

**Category:** Training and Awareness Measures

## General Objectives

The objective of the activity is twofold:

- to acquaint local stakeholders with knowledge concerning the financial sources available for funding of their innovative projects and ideas;
- to disseminate information regarding the SEE Transnational Programme and the AsviLoc plus project in order to enhance the visibility and transparency of financial support by the European Union;

## Target Group

The target group comprises all types of stakeholders, such as representatives of self-government organizations (municipalities), business oriented non-profit organizations, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), centres for professional training, banks, real-estate agencies, media representatives, self-employed persons, freelancers, etc.

## Brief description of Activity

There were four training seminars conducted by VEDA experts. The seminars were aimed at local stakeholders in Varna and the surrounding region. The seminars covered issues such as access to finance for projects related to innovative products/services and innovative companies, including eco-innovations and mechanisms for acquiring EU financing from the Structural Funds in Bulgaria via the Operational Programs. The emphasis was placed on financing possibilities from the Operational Programs »Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy« and »Human Resource Development«. Topics treated in this context were e.g. how to prepare successful proposals, how to avoid errors in the application process, etc.

The practical experience enabled the VEDA staff to improve its competences and organizational and presentation capacity in delivering innovative services to local and regional stakeholders. Four training seminars were held with an average of 40 participants, coming from companies with a variety of specializations located in Varna and the region.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice:

The key factors of success of these project activities include:

- well-timed dissemination of information about the pilot actions and the schedule of the training seminars to interested community stakeholders;
- careful selection of the topics of the seminars and adequate presentation and preparation of the VEDA speakers;
- opportunities for networking and experience sharing among the participants during the workshops;

## For more information:

[www.veda-bg.eu](http://www.veda-bg.eu)





# TRAINING TO ENTER FOREIGN MARKETS

## **Institution, Country**

South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency Nonprofit Ltd, Hungary

## **Name and Category of Activity**

**Name:** Export training in the South Transdanubian Region

**Category:** Training and Awareness Measures

## **General Objectives**

The main goal is to provide SMEs with the appropriate knowledge, competencies and practical know-how to enter foreign markets, leverage the opportunities, and monitor the achievements.

In order to achieve this objective, the target group should obtain comprehensive knowledge of strategical and financial planning, controlling, project management, corporate culture and the EU legislation. Participants should learn and practice skills needed for negotiations and presentations as well as language skills. Cross-border business requires knowledge about national and international – especially European – markets and the know-how and techniques of market entry. Participants should get acquainted with practical examples and best practices concerning the entry, advantages, disadvantages and challenges of international markets. It is also a main goal to improve the competitiveness of the targeted enterprises including employability, capabilities and competencies of employees.

## **Target Group**

The possible participants of the training sessions are micro-enterprises and SMEs of the South Transdanubian Region.

## **Brief description of Activity**

Using the regional surveys of the South Transdanubian Nonprofit Innovational Agency Ltd., a complex training program is developed to meet the training needs of local SMEs. Key stakeholders are integrated in the process. The training modules are based on preliminary surveys and cover knowledge and competencies necessary for the operation of a company.

## **Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice**

Key factors of success will be the adequacy of the training content as well as the involvement of independent experts into the training sessions.

## **For more information:**

[www.ddriu.hu](http://www.ddriu.hu)

# NEW SKILLS – INNOVATIVE IDEAS

## Institution, Country

North-East Regional Development Agency (NE RDA),  
Romania

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Business School North East

**Category:** Training and Awareness Measures

## General Objectives

The general objective is the creation of a Business School within NE RDA (using own staff and infrastructure) by developing new training services dedicated to the SMEs sector with the aim to strengthen their skills and capacities in the field of leadership, financial and strategic management.

## Target Group

- Staff of NE RDA (12 people), during the first and second phase of implementation;
- Top management representatives from SMEs located in the North-East region of Romania, in the third phase;

## Brief description of Activity

The first phase was implemented in April 2012 and consisted in providing vocational training to 12 professionals of the NE RDA in three new fields of expertise:

- Leadership (Module 1)
- Financial Management (Module 2)
- Strategic Management (Module 3)

As a result, the involved personnel of NE RDA disposes of improved skills in the fields of expertise mentioned above. This stage of »pre-formation« has achieved the following objectives:

- to learn new concepts;
- to achieve a proactive attitude towards training, teaching by example of the 3 teachers involved;
- to identify personnel qualified for the provision of trainings;

The second phase covers the development of 3 training programs adapted to the Romanian context and with methodological guidance from EBS (Extremadura Business School) on the one hand and the implementation of preparative activities for launching the Business School on the other hand. Participants of the training modules in the first stage will jointly develop the training programs. The training modules will be provided by 6 trainers, selected from the first phase participants. In June 2012, EBS experts will travel again to the NE RDA headquarter to assess Romanian trainers' performance and make the last adjustments to the curricula of this training program for managers of SMEs. The Romanian trainers will be evaluated and certification of competences delivered.

The third phase consists in providing specific training for staff representing top management from companies located in the region (pilot training). SMEs were selected on the basis of specific criteria like: experience, dimension, location in the region, field of activity.

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success are the selection of right persons for providing the envisaged trainings and the quality of the training content based on RDA experience accumulated during 13 years of activity in program and project management. The difficulties are the low entrepreneurial culture, particularly in remote areas and the training services delivered for free by competitors sponsored from EU projects.

## For more information:

[www.adrnordest.ro](http://www.adrnordest.ro)

# A FESTIVAL FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

## Institution, Country

Regional Development Agency of Rodopi S.A. in collaboration with the Centre of Technological Research of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, Kavala Technological Institute and the Regional Authority of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, Greece

## Name and Category of Activity

**Name:** Industrial Informatics Festival – Regional Innovation Technology Transfer

**Category:** Training and Awareness Measures

## General Objectives

The Industrial Informatics Festival attempted to shed light on the potential of the industrial informatics industry as well as the crucial influence of innovative plans on the social, economic, and cultural life of the citizens. Its specialized action programme intended to stimulate the students of the local and regional area to bring into surface innovative good practices and to provide the opportunity to the students to present their work on each relevant theme.

## Target Group

The target group included local and regional private sector entrepreneurs, academic society as well as students from all over the region.

## Brief description of Activity

The festival covered the following topics: Education, Students, Parents; Academia and Private Sector; Culture and Politics. In the course of the 2011 festival, within the theme »Education, Students, Parents«, students were offered simplified technological knowledge and they collaborated with the teachers of secondary education and created an interactive space of education and learning. This effort started with an innovative web contest and school visiting, where students answered in an electronic questionnaire. Finally, a great number of students visited the festival via scheduled trips, received useful information for technological issues during the specialized events and visited the Tech Show exhibition hall.

The activities during the Industrial Informatics Festival included:

- 4 days of interactive technological presentations, speeches and parallel activities
- 30 visits in schools all over the region
- 1516 students participated in the electronic web competition
- 10 students received a digital »book reader«
- 40 parents participated in the »electronic alphabet«
- 1250 students visited the festival and the organized technological lectures
- 500 university students participated in two meetings on technology, innovation and development
- 1445 web-followers via Facebook
- 4 days of web radio productions, video coverage, and meeting transmissions via web TV
- 3 days of various cultural activities
- over 30 technological artefacts were presented during the tech show

## Key factors of success/ key difficulties in practice

Key factors of success were the voluntary organizational support of 120 local students and citizens, the involvement of academic institutions and their networks as well as the extensive coverage from mass media (internet, web TV) ensuring the diffusion and dissemination of the good innovative practices in the wider region. The high number of participants either as visitors or in a volunteering basis provided a strong sense of success concerning the event.

## For more information:

[www.i2fest.gr](http://www.i2fest.gr)

# PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership is constituted by the following Regional Development Agencies and Regional Innovation Agencies of several SEE regions:



## **SVIM**

Sviluppo Marche SpA, Development Agency of Marche Region, Lead Partner (IT)

[www.svimspa.it](http://www.svimspa.it)

Sviluppo Marche, the Regional Development Agency of Marche Region, plays an important role in the implementation of Regional Development Policy and contributes to guarantee institutional, economic and social cohesion through the realization of projects designed to minimize the distance between public institutions, local community and companies.



## **CONSVIPO**

Consortium for the Development of Polesine (IT)

[www.consvipo.it](http://www.consvipo.it)

The mission of the Consortium for development of Polesine – Agency for Local Development- is to operate in synergy with Institutions, Autonomous Functions, Economic and Social Agencies for economic development, compatible with the peculiarity of the territory, as well as social growth.



## **INFORMEST**

Service and Documentation Centre for International Economic Cooperation (IT)

[www.informest.it](http://www.informest.it)

The mission of INFORMEST is to develop economic co-operation between the Italian North-eastern system of enterprises and organizations interested in the central and eastern European Countries.

# PARTNERSHIP



## **AWS**

Austria Wirtschaftsservice (AT)

[www.awsg.at](http://www.awsg.at)

Austria Wirtschaftsservice – AWS, a governmental agency with long experience in supporting companies with focus on innovation transfer, manages public financial instruments and provides innovation consultancy services through various programmes, which are implemented in coordination with regional institutions. Due to ongoing exchange of experience contributes to know how transfer between economic actors, the design of incentive programmes and innovation awareness.



## **VEDA**

Varna Economic Development Agency (BG)

[www.veda-bg.eu](http://www.veda-bg.eu)

VEDA aims towards leadership in the establishment of conditions for sustainable economic development of Varna and the region. The agency supports the building of the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through impartial providing of information, consulting services and training. VEDA promotes networking, the attraction of foreign investments in the Region, and improvement of the local employment opportunities.



## **ANATOLIKI**

Development Agency of Eastern Thessaloniki (GR)

[www.anatoliki.gr](http://www.anatoliki.gr)

ANATOLIKI s.a. is the Development Agency of Eastern Thessaloniki aiming at implementing the necessary actions for the success of the following goals:

- I. Exploitation of human resources, labor market integration and mobilisation of human factor.
- II. Promoting an integrated economic, social and cultural development of the region by enhancing, exploiting and protecting natural resources.



## **ANRO**

Regional Development Agency of Rodopi (GR)

[www.anro.gr](http://www.anro.gr)

Rodopi Development SA creates, supports, coordinates, materializes and administrates local developmental initiatives that correspond to the needs of Public and Private institutions in the wider region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

# PARTNERSHIP



## STRIA

South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency (HU)  
[www.ddriu.hu](http://www.ddriu.hu)

The main aims of the STRIA are to improve the innovation capacity of the regional SMEs, to support the technology transfer activities of the knowledge bases and to foster the international knowledge exchange.



## ADRNORDEST

North-East Regional Development Agency (RO)  
[www.adrnordest.ro](http://www.adrnordest.ro)

The agency is a generator of economic and social development in the North-East Region of Romania. RDA develops strategies, attracts resources, identifies and implements financing programmes and offers services for stimulating sustainable economic development, partnerships and entrepreneurial spirit.



## NW RDA

North West Regional Development Agency (RO)  
[www.nord-vest.ro](http://www.nord-vest.ro)

The NW RDA pursues, through its projects to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the region by creating an innovation support system at regional level and by the promotion of an innovation culture.



## IDA

Istrian Development Agency (HR)  
[www.ida.hr](http://www.ida.hr)

The mission of IDA is the creation and implementation of measures for entrepreneurship development focused on the growth of Istria Region economy competitiveness. Therefore IDA's activities are focused towards R&D development and the support of innovative companies.



## HRAST

Development Agency Vukovar-Srijem County  
»HRAST« ltd (HR)  
[www.ar-hrast.hr](http://www.ar-hrast.hr)

HRAST performs a strategic support role in the planning of local economic development and of entrepreneurial system. HRAST is providing following activities: stimulation of the development of SMEs in the County through following activities: providing information, consultant services,



