

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

### EU – MEXICO GUATEMALA

#### INNOVATION FOR PROMOTION OF TERRITORIAL COHESION 28<sup>TH</sup> OF FEBRUARY 2018, MEXICO CITY

The high level event in Mexico City has brought together high level representatives of cooperation, research and innovation and external affairs from Mexico, Guatemala and EU. **The aim of the meeting was to foster the commitment among the interested parties for cross-border collaboration in the field of innovation in two main topics: energy and agriculture.** Through cooperation local capacities and commitments for growth driven by innovation more concretely can be strengthen. The meeting was the first of its kind and will be followed by further cooperation activities.

There were more than 80 participants from Mexico and Guatemala, from research and innovation institutions, ministries, associations, clusters and companies. The event was structured into the plenary session in the morning and afternoon workshops. They were more practically oriented and dedicated to the discussions about future developments and cooperation potentials.

The event was official opened by welcome speeches from:

- Mrs. Cristina Ruiz Ruiz, Deputy General Director for Europe, Asia and North America at the Ministry for external affairs of Mexico,
- Mr. Ramón López Sánchez, General Directorate of Urban and Regional Policy of the European Commission,
- Mr. Oscar Manuel Cobar Pinto, National Secretary of Science and Technology from Guatemala,
- Mr. Hugo Figueroa, Director of Technological Innovation of the National Council of Science and Technology from Guatemala,
- Mr. Narcizo Alberto Amador Leal, General Director of Regional Development, Secretariat of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development from Mexico.

The presentations in panel pointed out the benefits of the cooperation to foster the implementation of innovation strategies. Also the development and the approaches of EU Smart Specialisation Strategies were presented. **Special focus was given to the presentation of Smart Specialisation Platforms and their partnerships that were already developed.** The experiences of Slovenia were presented. Slovenia is very small country with 4 neighbouring countries so the cross border cooperation is very important and a big potential for the development in the field of innovation and smart specialisations.

During the panel presentation the participants were very interested in the development of smart specialisation, mapping of strengths and potentials. **Particular interest were given to energy and bioenergy as one of the very important development fields for Mexico and Guatemala** besides the agriculture and tourisms. Energy market in the areas has just started to open up. Renewable energy sources and energy efficiency is coming on the agenda. The **comments and questions were also oriented towards better understanding of clusters and its operation in energy and agriculture field**. During the presentation, the initiative of EU Smart Specialisation Strategies and Worldwide cooperation was presented and **participants were invited to join the platform**. Through international cooperation sensitizing and transferring the knowledge about the modes and instruments of governance, innovation and strategic sustainable development is possible, including the exhibition of successful examples.

In the afternoon, the participants were dynamically involved exposing different points of view and prioritizing the strategic needs. Three main questions were discussed:

- Where do we want to be in 10 years?
- How do we reach this goal?
- What prevents us today from undertaking this aims?

The participants at the workshop have come from different energy related sector. They work in research and innovation filed, in public administration or in private sector, with renewables or fossil fuels technologies. Some of them work in educational and training institutions.

Within energy working group, **bioenergy was pointed out as one of the main potential for development of rural areas in cross border region. The value chains should be developed including educations, trainings, scientific and technological research, mapping and analysis for cooperation in innovation together with the relevant stakeholders to advance in the identification of ideas for potential projects**. They have agreed that smart specialisation approach with mapping the potentials and needs would bring very important information for stakeholders and decision makers. Due to the opening of energy markets different challenges have arisen but also new opportunities for SME and ICT have come. Special focus should be given to climate changes policies and their integration in all other policies to respond better to economic and societal challenges.

Participants agreed that upcoming climate hazards will hit industry, transport and energy infrastructure hard causing economic losses. With more energy sources, focused on customers' needs and wishes and good response to different environmental and other conditions the companies, countries and society could be

more flexible adoptable. **The participants concluded that for future development the internal cooperation in clusters and external cooperation on global level, in**

**initiatives like smart specialisation platforms is crucial.** The conclusions of the workshop were as follow:

- To develop the regions and countries in the field of sustainable energy the stakeholders have to be included in all stages from planning to the implementation of activities.
- Good public policies, regulatory and standardisation cross sectoral and integrated framework have to be develop to foster innovative processes – so called Roadmap for innovation.

The government of Mexico also considered that the bi-national relationship is at a decisive moment in order to create a safer, more prosperous and competitive area, through the creation of energy integration, electric interconnection and environmental sanitation projects. The utilization of the productive potential of the South of Mexico, which is closely linked with Guatemala, will stimulate the integration of the region, attracting more investments and facilitating trade in both directions. The international cooperation with EU also plays an important role.

Dr. Vlasta KRME LJ, Dipl.Ing.



The presidency of the High level Event EU – Mexico – Guatemala: Mrs. Cristina Ruiz Ruiz, Mr. Ramón López Sánchez, Mr. Oscar Manuel Cobar Pinto, Mr. Hugo Figueroa and Mr. Narcizo Alberto Amador Leal



Presentation of the EU Smart Specialisation Platforms by Mrs. Krmelj



INNOVACT project working group on the energy