

## **Focus Group - Pilot 3**

**Challenges and opportunities in R&I funding promotion for  
RIS3 implementation**

# Pilot 3

## Issues raised by the Working Group

- National Contact Points (NCPs) in H2020 have a particular focus on the national level. The understanding of the regional issues is often limited, as well as the experience in dealing with local/regional authorities.
- The idea of regional contact points was suggested as a way to address regional concerns. Having regional RIS3 contact points was proposed as an option to have a more complete vision of the set of instruments, focusing not only on chasing the money but also on being able to connect regional stakeholders.
- Additional context:
  - ICT NCPs from the IDEAL-IST network had a discussion with 4 managing authorities on 12 Nov 2018 in JRC Seville (Wales, Centro/Portugal, Extremadura, France). Lessons from this discussion are brought into this pilot proposal.
  - Under S2E II an event with NCPs has been organised

# Objectives and context of this pilot

## Pilot Objectives

- Increase the understanding of rationales, opportunities and bottlenecks for collaboration between funding promoters
- Design alternative options for such collaboration in different contexts and territories
- Prepare for the next programming period
- Initial focus on ESIF and Horizon Europe
- Possible extension to other 'contact points': LIFE Contact Points, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Contact Points, etc.

# Earlier findings: Rationales for closer collaboration

- **3.1 A multi-level governance component:**
  - Lack of awareness of regional R&I strengths
  - Lack of understanding regional structures
  - Low involvement from NCPs in the RIS3 development processes at regional level
  - NCPs as a gateway for regions to be more visible in international networks/interregional collaboration
  - More regional involvement in FP
  - Widening needs outside EU13, lagging regions in advanced countries
  - Increase NCP knowledge of FP information relevant for the territory (JUs, EIT KICs,...)

# Earlier findings: Rationales for closer collaboration

- **3.2 An innovation component:**
  - bottlenecks on the interface between fundamental research, applied research, market uptake
  - Role of NCPs in bridging these interfaces upstream and downstream?
- **3.3 A multi-funding component:**
  - Opportunities to promote funding opportunities also outside H2020 (ESIF, national, other)
- **3.4 A strategy component:**
  - An integrated vision and strategy for the territory
  - Highlight alignment with the European challenges/priorities
  - Communicating this strategy actively
  - Where do NCPs fit?
  - Role of NCPs as influencers in new programme design

# Earlier findings: Bottlenecks with regard to collaborations

- Capacity to engage (on both sides): budgetary and human resources limitations
- Divergence of the legal framework and timelines at regional (and national) and EU levels on RDI funding
- Available information: How to increase and coordinate the information available on different funding options?
- Competition versus collaboration: MSs and regions are collaborating and competing on their RIS3 priorities
- Misconceptions and lack of understanding:
  - NCPs perceiving ESIF as bureaucratic and RIS3 priorities as very generic
  - ESIF managers knowing little about FP
- Structures of national NCP networks: Territorial specialisation versus thematic specialisation

# Earlier findings: Possible activity areas for addressing the issues identified (1)

- National NCP networks can train regional support teams/clusters/regional innovation agencies
- Better division of labour between regional and national level
- Role of NCPs in interregional/international networks
- Role for NCPs in designing local tools and programmes which are in line with European tools
- Possibility for regions to transfer up to 5% of their Cohesion Policy resources to another EU fund (with NCP guidance)
- Role of NCPs in uptake of FP research results (for developing pilots or demonstration projects with ESIF)
- Better developed guidance for applicants about all kinds of funding instruments
- Develop a structured two-way communication (national/regional, NCPs/MAs) through a network

# Earlier findings: Possible activity areas for addressing the issues identified (2)

- Suggestions to resolve the bottlenecks
- Establish regional contact points that mirror NCPs to improve the reach of contact points
- Make smart use also of NCPs of third countries
- Support in establishing alliances with EU wide initiatives and platforms in chosen specialisation areas
- EU wide improvement of information among NCP concerning RIS3, ESIF, thematic interregional partnerships
- Using ERDF to strengthen H2020 participation particularly for writing and preparing proposals (in collaboration with NCPs)
- Support NCPs to allow them to help stakeholders either upstream or downstream to make the most of all the instruments at their disposal.
- Similarly regional authorities should also have similar integrated view and this empowerment can happen through training the trainer.



# Methodology of the Focus Group

- Learning Lab with NCPs: How do different territories make use of NCPs?
- Pilot for increased collaboration in one particular territory (Ms/region), focused on a limited number of activity areas
- Mapping potential roles of NCPs or regional contact points in a territory, starting from a particular RIS3

S.T.

L.T.

COMM. & INFO.

internationalisation

JOINT STRATEGIES

MARKET REINF.

DEVELOP JOINT ACTIVITIES

Commission  
approx flow of  
communication  
between EA w  
NCS

EU wide improvement of  
information among NCPs  
concerning RIS3, EITF, thematic  
Synergies, synergies

EU Policies  
~~not~~ identified  
should have network/regular  
contact.

Research info/legis to upload  
on youtube

Case 12  
NCPs from  
collaboration

Best practice,  
but best cases,  
with RESEARCHERS.

Making the case to involve  
regional stakeholders  
in design, impl, disse.

EU  
- get in touch with  
more people and formally  
involve experts  
- creation of integrated  
activity should and  
synergies and benefits

STRATEGY  
NCP guidance in possibility  
to transfer % of cohesion  
funds to other EU funds

STRATEGY  
Make maximum of NCPs in  
them countries

STRATEGY  
Reinforce the role of NCPs  
in international  
networks

STRATEGY  
collaboration  
between  
PPP and RA/BA

Cooperation  
agreement  
with commitment  
from high-level  
of

Involve NCS in  
designing RIS3,  
in funding programs

Ensure NCPs are  
included in the definition  
of RIS3  
Improving Word about  
H2020 structure/content  
→ proactive approach

NCP #7  
SPECIALIZED  
FOR  
INDUSTRY  
FIGURE

CREATE #7  
AN AGE OF  
8th UK  
DARPA  
IN U.S.A.

Close Collaboration  
between NCPs and  
EITF Partners has  
the potential to boost  
synergies, also at  
Project Level. Public  
incentives will help  
also

Joint activity  
NCPs - Public R&D  
Network in Spain  
→ what do EITF projects  
need from NCPs?

Working groups  
at national level  
between research  
and innovation  
policy makers and  
national contact  
points

Joint activities

Strengthen the role of  
NCPs in uptake of  
FP research results

ST  
- NCP should be aware of  
the possible synergies in  
their own activity and be  
proactive  
- Be also aware of regional  
obstacles and opportunities  
in cooperation with regional  
authorities  
- Involve major players  
in their activities  
- Involve associations,  
industry associations,  
university centers, clusters  
- Consider innovation agencies  
technology transfer centers  
- Organize of joint  
workshops  
- Simplification is a key  
condition for synergies  
- Mention also National  
the use of EITF and

# Options for next steps

- Interest in online and physical info sessions (ES, NCP.WIDE NET,...)
- Wider Focus Group involving stakeholders/beneficiaries and NPCs of other funding and financing sources
- Working paper on funding promotion