



The BRIDGES project experience

Interregional Cooperation workshop,
25.02.2020

Final reflections

- How and to what extent can inter-regional cooperation strengthen the operation of S3 in the region? Are the two mutually reinforcing? How can / does inter-regional cooperation contribute to improving regional innovation performance and regional competitiveness?



Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Extent to which RIS3 takes account of external / international context
 - When BRIDGES started: external /international context was very little taken into account by the RIS3.
 - Now, i.e. nearing the end of Phase 2: RIS3 takes into account external / international contexts at delivery & planning stages.
- CHANGE VERIFICATION
 - BRIDGES project impact: Mainstreaming of the pilot action 'Transregional access to innovation on demand' in the revised RIS3
 - RIS3 REVISION process: Identification of potential interregional partnerships through statistics indicator-driven approach (complementarities, interdependencies, similarities, digitalisation (I4.0 closing the loop for biog data applications)....) & develop initiatives accordingly (in process).

Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Areas, goals and scope of collaboration
 - AREA: All industries with well defined and relevant potential for interregional cooperation
- GOAL:
 - Construct regional advantage utilising also the potential of interregional partnership
 - Improve RIS3 delivery “on the ground”
 - Addressing mismatches between the research/knowledge and economic RIS3 bases of the partner regions
 - Regionalised innovation systems (Leydesdorff indicator*)

*Leydesdorff, L. and Fritsch, M. (2005). Measuring the Knowledge Base of Regional Innovation Systems in Germany in terms of a Triple Helix Dynamics, [2005] 10 Freiberg Working Papers 1-26 <<https://tu-freiberg.de/sites/default/files/media/fakultaet-6-3307/>

- SCOPE OF COLLABORATION: RIS3 planning, strategy, and delivery of the RIS3

Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Rationale for choice of partners
 - Geography: not really
 - Other:
 - (i) Innovation performance (European Innovation Scoreboard 2014, 2015,...) of the partner regions: BRIDGES wanted to bring together advanced and less advanced regions and create long term interregional partnerships.
 - (ii) In principle economic base proximities (bio-based industries in RIS3)
 - (iii) Prior (good) cooperation with about 60% of the partners was important reference for inviting them to the project.
- Complementarities, similarities, and differences
 - Industrial composition: economic base proximities as part of the RIS3, bio-based economy
 - Research capacities with emphasis on the competences of the innovation advanced region
 - Societal challenges: not really
 - Other: (1) Institutional, service, and competence gaps of RIS3-related innovation systems; (2) Acknowledged mismatches between the RIS3 economic and research bases of the partner regions.

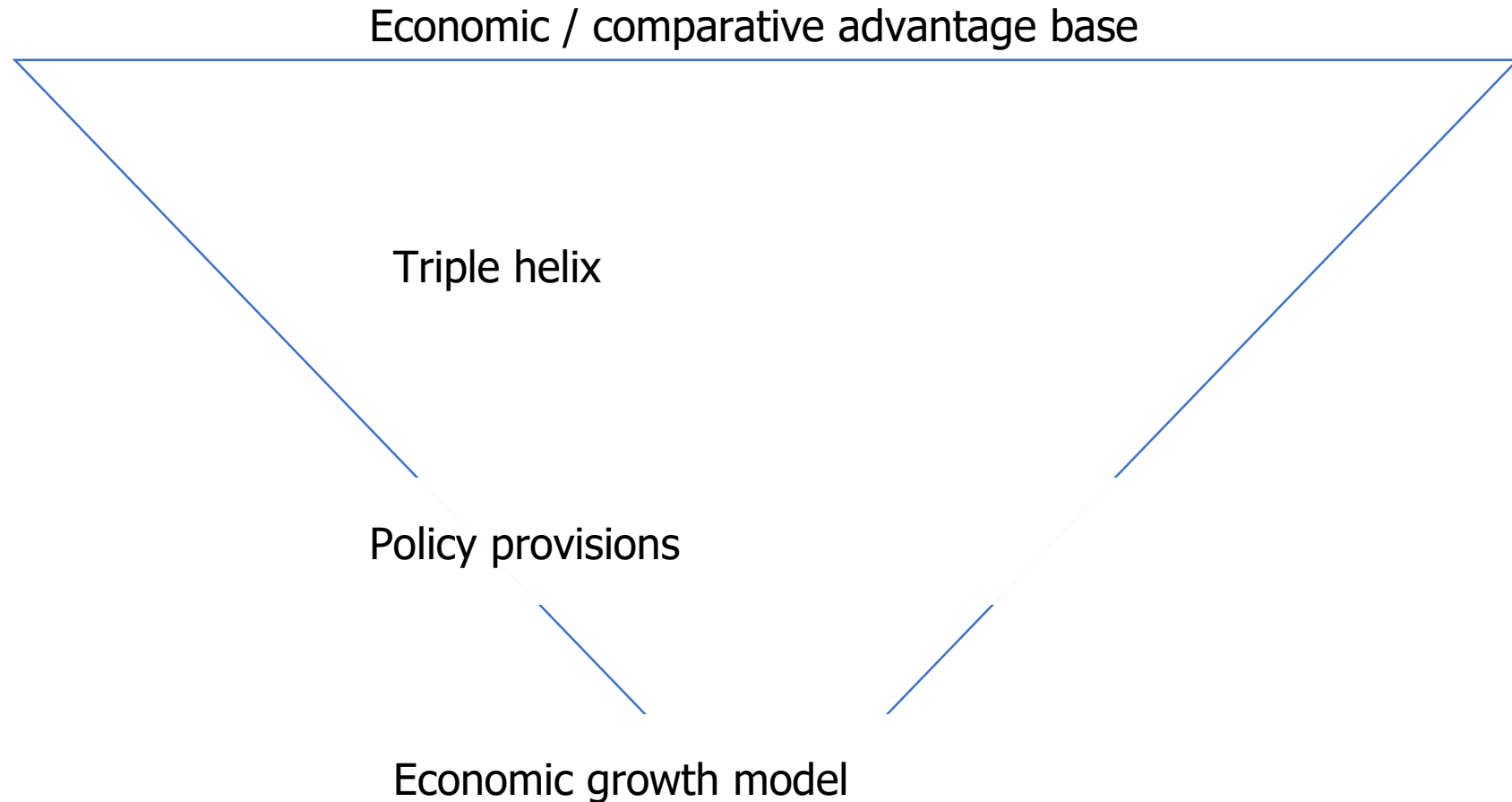
Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Resources (financial, including instruments / programmes and initiatives)
 - Overall policy instrument: ERDF, Thematic Objective (TO)1; one partner mobilised also the CLLD (Community-led local development)
 - Phase 1: project funds (total BRIDGES project budget 1 807 696,00€)
 - Phase 2:
 - Action plans implementation budget 1 831 463,00€.
 - The incurred spending will be re-assessed and discussed at the end of Phase 2, during the writing of the final report of the project, October 2020-March 2021.

Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Institutional proximities, governance, actors, relationships and engagement
 - REGIONS:
 - Governance proximities: RIS3 background affords a very good starting point for government/policy and governance proximities.
 - Institutional / Government proximities: Development companies, without the support of MAs/IBs, do not suffice... .
 - PARTNERS:
 - Institutional proximities: see above
 - Relational proximities: Commitment of each one of the partners; hands on approach; risk sharing.
 - Knowledge proximities: familiarity of the partners with knowledge economy & innovation systems approaches.

Framework and features of the interregional cooperation



Framework and features of the interregional cooperation

- Evolution of cooperation e.g. **policy design v implementation, actors involved**
 - General to concrete
 - Framework to implementation
 - Regional to national and transregional
 - Government to governance (weak impact)
 - **WHAT WAS MISSED:** The 2nd reading, external assessment of regional potential

Drivers and Constraints for Cooperation

- Geography: not really
- Policy mix, DRIVER to be explored further: RIS3 forms a very good shared conceptual and regulatory background
- Delivery of policy, CONSTRAINT to turn into DRIVER:
 - Interregional cooperation measures part of the RIS3 delivery
 - Research-to-business/industry/innovation system measures part of the RIS3 delivery
- Finance, DRIVER & potential CONSTRAINT:
 - In some cases, challenges with aligning action plans to policy instruments and the associated funding criteria;
 - If no funds reserved for Phase 2, only part of the work is done. Phase 2 provisions into the forthcoming SF, maybe somewhat like the national co-funding approaches.

Drivers and Constraints for Cooperation

- Politico-institutional, CONSTRAINT:
 - Insufficiently involved/committed MAs/IBs
 - Cooperation philosophies of partners, regions, sometimes not aligned
- Economic characteristics, CONSTRAINT:
 - Path dependency on lock ins, i.e. on 'business as usual' (both for the advanced and the less advanced regions)
 - Growth /specialisation / diversification opportunities restricted by small critical mass of the market and these facts not addressed
- Socio-cultural, CONSTRAINT:
 - Added value of the project "on the ground" very slowly revealed; learning requirements conflict with key actors priorities for immediate results
 - Explaining that getting excellence used by SMEs to other parts of the world, is possible
 - SMEs attitude to innovation calls

Drivers and Constraints for Cooperation

- RIS3-specific aspects:
 - (1) DRIVER: RIS3 as a precondition including all the associated knowledge and exchanges within the project and especially beyond.
 - (2) DRIVERS that might turn into CONSTRAINTS if not satisfied and vice versa:
 - KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY Shared and comparable understanding of knowledge economy functions and operations, including distributed knowledge bases is good to be ensured à priori.
 - WIN-WIN COOPERATION MODEL between innovation advanced and less advanced regions: Economies of scale vs economies of scope (diversification “vs” specialisation).
 - METHODOLOGY Understanding of ‘research-to- business/industry/regional innovation system’ methodologies and expectations should be shared equally by all involved.

Drivers and Constraints for Cooperation

- RIS3–specific aspects:
 - (3) CHALLENGES that can turn into CONSTRAINTS:
 - The RIS3 'backbone' to have (minimal) recognisable, shared operational references, innovation infrastructures with well defined characteristics. **RTOs and the EARTO association are such good practice. A comparable approach, but tailored to localised contexts could be adopted by regional research and technology transfer organisations & units, and centres of competence.**
 - Commercialisation priorities of research units might be quite niche oriented, e.g. **"One of the challenges that the pilot action came up with was that research and technology transfer organisations have oriented their interests towards interactions with large market actors and contract research. Therefore, the SME focus was not really relevant."** (meeting with the University of Helsinki, 12.2.2020).
 - Growth /specialisation / diversification opportunities restricted by small critical mass of the market and these facts not addressed.

Benefits and outcomes

- Overall regional innovation performance including mobility of resources and ideas
 - RIS3 visibility “on the ground” achieved in 50% of regions (new products)
 - A shared development language is highly recommended (Knowledge economy ‘terms on reference’ ...).
 - Win-win model between innovation advanced and less advanced regions introduced and explained; existence of accessible tools supporting effectively cross border/transregional win-win cooperations; deserves to be researched & explored further
 - Government is AS important AS governance
 - Engagement & involvement of MAs/IBs **CANNOT BE OVERESTIMATED;** development companies in very close cooperation with IBs/MAs The commitment to the implementation of Phase 2 must be more clearly pathed out including reservation of resources.

Benefits and outcomes

- Overall regional innovation performance including mobility of resources and ideas
 - The importance of research and technology transfer organisations
 - Adapting policy tools (project criteria calls) and foreseeing preparatory actions; involving research and technology transfer organisations for increasing the innovation absorptive capacity of businesses towards better absorption of the Structural Funds innovation calls (Poland)
 - Criteria and qualifications for research and technology transfer organisations as diffusers of specialised knowledge and as methodological cross border integrators (regional thematic platforms and specialised knowledge transfer, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia).
 - The importance of Centres of Competence (source: https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/news/7724/accelerating-the-innovation-process-through-centres-of-competence/?no_cache=1&cHash=71436d53a25c4e89131154fff7c5836a)
 - Centres of Competence must be flexible in funding research projects with different funding mechanisms at different [Technology Readiness Levels \(TRLs\)](#),
 - a market-oriented integrated 'one-stop-shop' centre of competence must offer different types of services to promote science-industry collaboration, and
 - international cooperation through bilateral contract research must be a strategic operational objective for Centres of Competence.

Benefits and outcomes

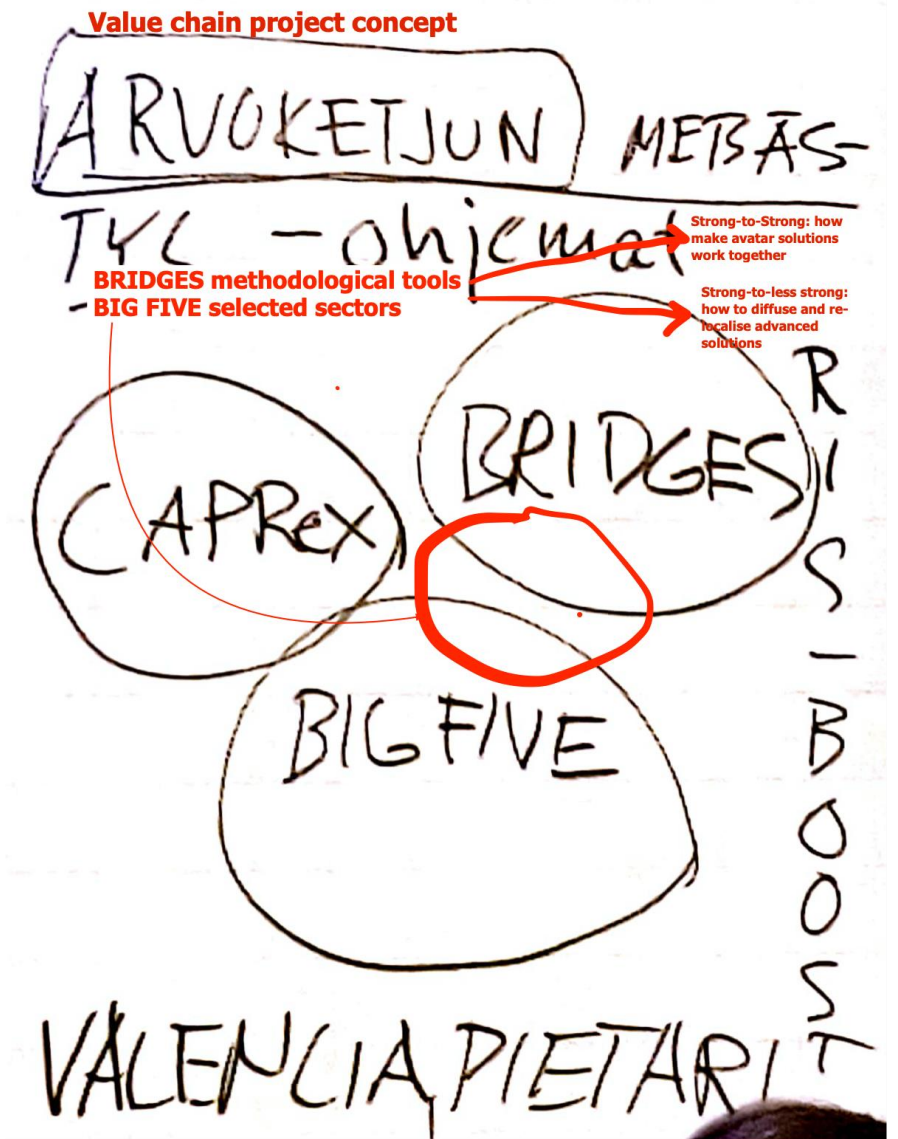
- Business related benefits
 - New product development reaching market:
 - Aquaculture products, inputs from LUKE/Uusimaa, FI (Goriška, SI)
 - Emerging industries:
 - Lignine side flows, researched and processed into glue for the wood construction industry (Kainuu, including the University of OU (OU), VTT, Kantola, and large firms operations, FI)
 - Step by step EDP applied in Kainuu in view of the lignine processing action; based on external demand conditions and national / regional research resources
- Research-to-business interregional benefits
 - Opening of the West Macedonia ROP to actors beyond the region, research (VTT/Uusimaa, FI) to business (West Macedonia, GR) innovation call, vegetable-based proteins, new product development for cattle raising.

Benefits and outcomes

- Pilot action: Transregional access to innovation on demand, —> commercialisation of research, progress and findings to date 20.2.2020)
 - 3 mini projects to date (20.2.2020): (i) lingonberry ingredients for cosmetics, TRL 4 —> TRL6, applied; (ii) bilberry leaves ingredients for cosmetics, TRL 4 —> TRL6, application in preparation; (iii) pinetree knots ingredients for food industry, TRL 5 —> TRL6, application in preparation.
 - Follow up funding options ++++ (follow up funding at the moment not eligible in ERDF)
 - Amount of support too small, ideal would be 20000€ at least; analysis & communication should be covered.
 - The higher the TRL the easier to estimate the price for the next TRL scale.
 - Concept at the beginning appeared a bit confusing, but it was clarified in the way.
 - Finding clients was not a problem. Clients (firms) from the EU (2) and also outside the EU (1).
 - “Transregional access to innovation on demand” good to continue, such tool missing till now.

Benefits and outcomes

- CAPITALISATION: Example of possible next steps, directly from a co-creation meeting with Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council.
- EARLY INSTITUTIONALISATION of the project's findings: RIS3 processes + negotiations with EC & TEM (Kainuu + Uusimaa).



Preparation 2021-2027

[in relation to incorporation of an outward-looking or international dimension to EDP / RIS3]

- Lessons learnt to date – what didn't work as expected, why and what can be done to overcome the obstacles?
 - Uptake of innovations to become RIS3 priorities, linked to the enabling conditions on Transition and Interregional Cooperation Measures.
 - The Phase 1 and Phase 2 project approach to remain, but Phase 2 funding and commitments should be pathed out much better, for example, there should be formal commitment of SF or other concretely named funds for the implementation of the action plans.
 - Involvement of MAs and IBs to become a must.
 - The feasibility approach and the interregional action plans approach to be retained.

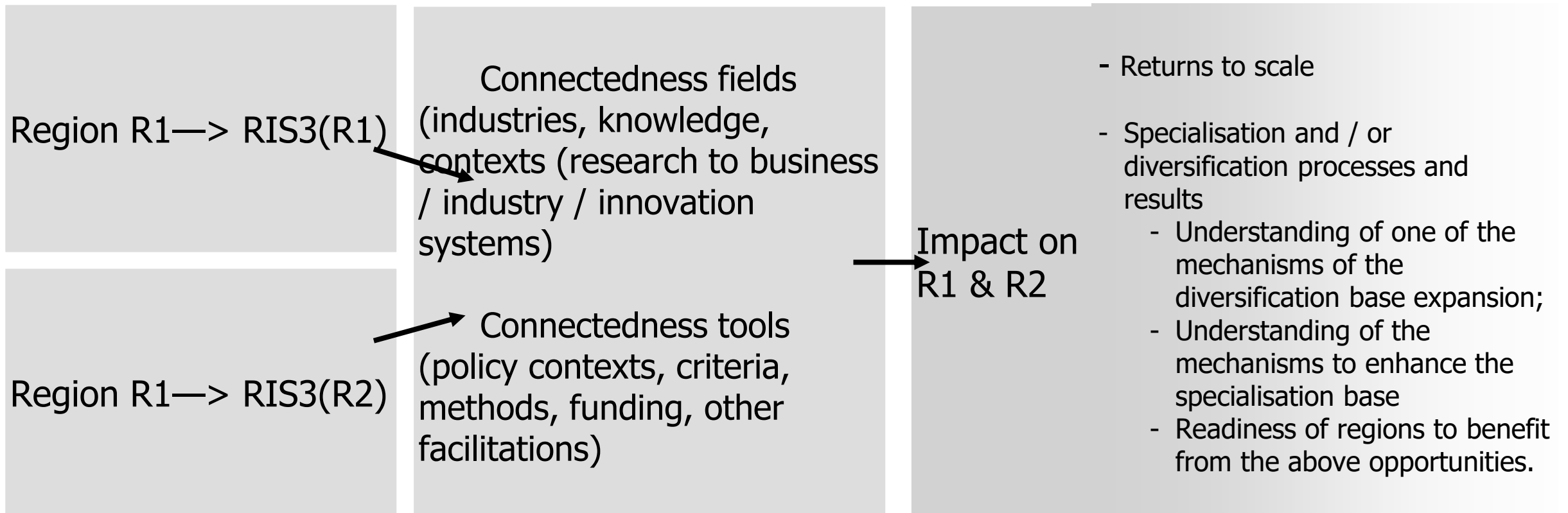
Preparation 2021-2027

[in relation to incorporation of an outward-looking or international dimension to EDP / RIS3]

- Recommendations for better integration of international dimension and interregional cooperation
- DEFINITELY the 7th enabling condition **for drawing the RIS3 of the next period setting interregional cooperation measures as a headline. Linked to this, include into the RIS3**
 - **STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE CHANNELS / LEARNING IS A DYNAMIC PROCESS:** encourage regional authorities to pilot new measures across the EU, in relatively straightforward terms, aiming at capitalising the results for EU project criteria and national / regional policy making.
 - **INNOVATION SYSTEM INTERACTIONS:** RIS3 to institutionalise interactions with the most relevant research & knowledge sources when regional resources not sufficient; RIS3 to integrate explicit interactions with ERA actors and projects; RIS3 to encourage interactions and research with interregional actors.
 - **PROJECT PROVISIONS:** measures for interregional clustering and support in the RIS3; measures for upstreaming and downstreaming from Horizon 2020 and soon Horizon EUROPE projects; measures for demand-led (=anticipatory) actions to enable local economies respond to societal challenges and reach innovation markets, e.g. stakeholder / 3 helix (at least) mobilisation; mainstreaming the Green Deal goals.
 - **FUNDING PROVISIONS:** commitment to project and initiative funding that have resulted from interregional & transnational cooperations (e.g. the next IE but not only); interregional innovation on demand options to be included into the RIS3 (beyond innovation vouchers)

Final reflections

- How and to what extent can inter-regional cooperation strengthen the operation of S3 in the region? Are the two mutually reinforcing? How can / does inter-regional cooperation contribute to improving regional innovation performance and regional competitiveness?



Final reflections

- Benefit from the RIS3 “language”, its growth, structuring & integration potential
- Potential for win-win This requires partnerships built on complementary, non competing objectives, innovation system and industry-based long term partnerships.
- Straightforward tools for interregional case-by-case cooperation to be included into the RIS3 (innovation on demand)
- WIN-WIN MODEL OF COOPERATION between innovation advanced (agglomeration economies) and less advanced regions (economies of scope), to be studied in more depth and tested further. Maybe pilots could be built around it.

Interviewed partners

- PROJECT PARTNERS

- PP2/PP1: Kainuun Etu (LP), Antti Toivanen; Regional Council of Kainuu (IB), Jouni Ponnikas; stakeholder University of Oulu, Mari Jaakkola
- PP3: Lubelskie Voivodship (MA), PL: Agata Kossakowska Dorota Skwarek
- PP4: Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council (IB), FI: Ari Lainevo, Juha Eskelinen, Lauri Kuukasjärvi; stakeholder VTT, Leena Sarvaranta.
- PP5: ANKO, GR: Tasos Sidiropoulos, Spyros Kellidis
- PP6: Soca Valley Development Centre (CLLD), SI , Miro Kristan
- PP7: PBN, HU: Balázs Barta, Renáta Csabai, Robert Nemeth

- ADVISORY PARTNERS

- PP8: CEEI Burgos, ES, Juan Carlos Martinez
- PP9: CERTH, GR, Thomas Bartzanas

Thanks

- To the Interreg Europe programme and the Joint Technical Secretariat for their long term support.
- To the Joint Research Centre / Lagging Regions project and the long term cooperation and fruitful exchange.

Ninetta Chaniotou

Notes

BRIDGES project reminder

- Programme: [Interreg Europe, 1st call, www.interregeurope.eu/bridges](http://www.interregeurope.eu/bridges)
- Full name: [Bridging competence infrastructure gaps and speeding up growth and jobs delivery in regions.](#)
- Index: [PGI 00040 BRIDGES](#)
- Priority: [Specific objective 1.1 Improving innovation infrastructure policies.](#)
- Timetable: [approved 10.2.2016, Phase 1 1.4.2016-31.3.2019; Phase 2: 1.4.2019-31.3.2021.](#)
- Partners: (i) Regional partners: PP2/PP1: [Regional Council of Kainuu \(IB\) and Kainuun Etu Oy, FI](#); PP3: [Lubelskie Voivodship \(MA\), PL](#); PP4: [Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council \(IB\), FI](#); PP5: [ANKO, GR](#); PP6: [Soca Valley Development Centre \(CLLD\), SI](#); PP7: [PBN, HU](#); (ii) advisory partners: PP8: [CEEI Burgos, ES](#), PP9: [CERTH, GR](#).
- Budget: [1 807 696,00€, 85% funded by the Interreg Europe programme.](#)
- Good practices: [17 uploaded to the IE policy learning platform, 14 approved, 7 transferred](#)
- Action plans: [6 approved by the IE, 5 endorsed](#)
- Action plans implementation: [4 regions](#)
- Policy impact: [4 policy instruments \(2 improvements during Phase 1, and 2 during Phase 2\)](#)

Pre-condition: Bio-based industries part of the RIS3 if all partner regions

1. Diagnosis

1.1 Context

From the RIS3 industries, identification of the most promising industries

1.2 Innovation map: how does research connect to business in the partner regions?

Assessment of the state of play of technological connectivity types relevant to RIS3 in the region

1.3 Second readings

What is the regional potential through the eyes of an external scientist?

2. Opportunities

2.1 Good practices

Examples of 'technological connectivities', of how well functioning innovation infrastructures connect to businesses.

2.1 Good practice selection for transfer

2.2 Regional economic complementarities & knowledge base synergies, for long time partnerships

3. Localisation

3.1 Optimisation questions = Localisation of the GP to regional opportunities, needs and findings on innovation map

3.2 Feasibility study: Analysis of the RIS3 in terms of possibilities for the GP transfer, as a precondition for the action plan

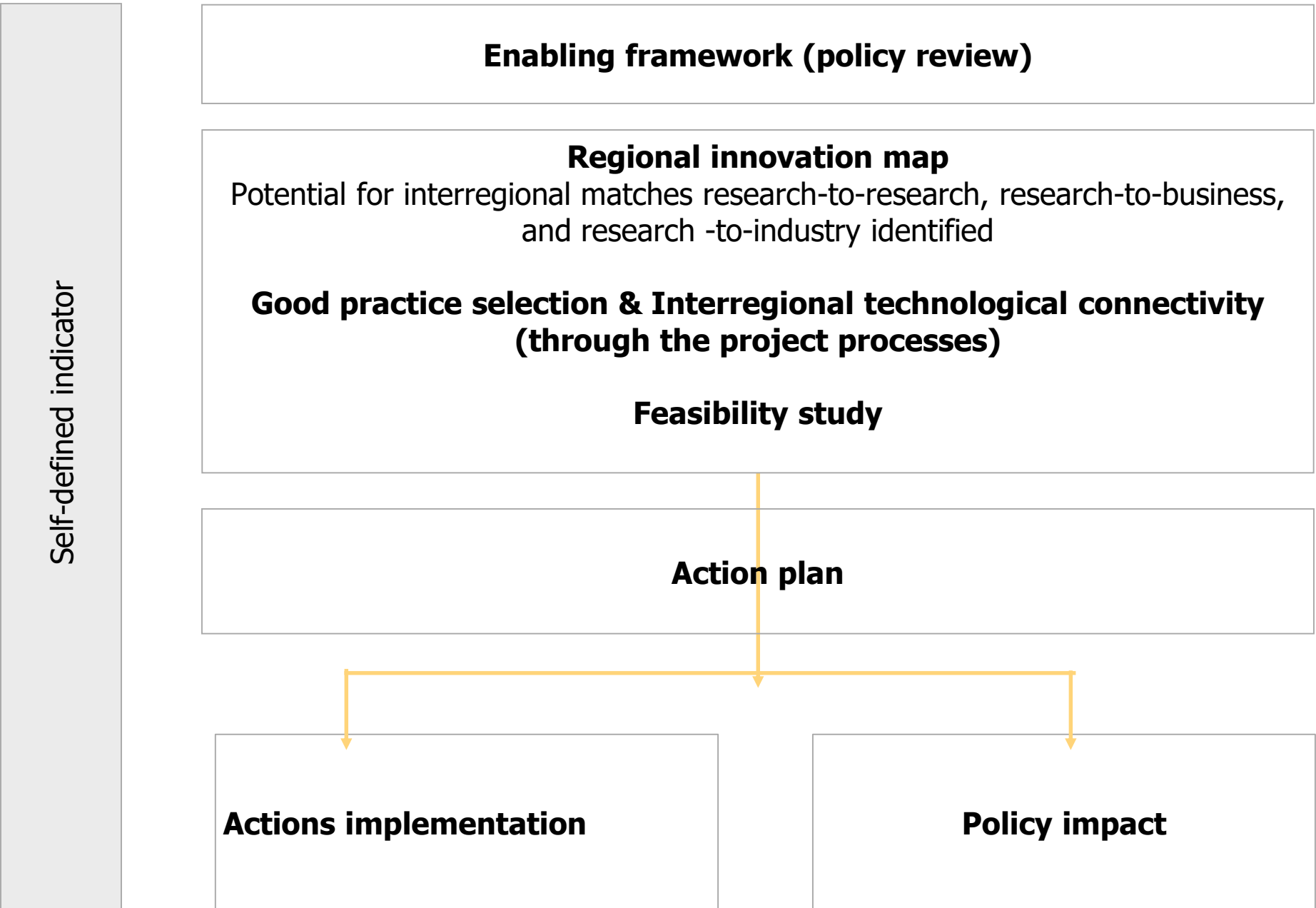
3.3 Non-anticipated findings: mismatches of the research and productive base can be addressed by matching economic and research strengths, provided tools accessing interregional innovation on demand are available.

4. Action plan & pilot action implementation

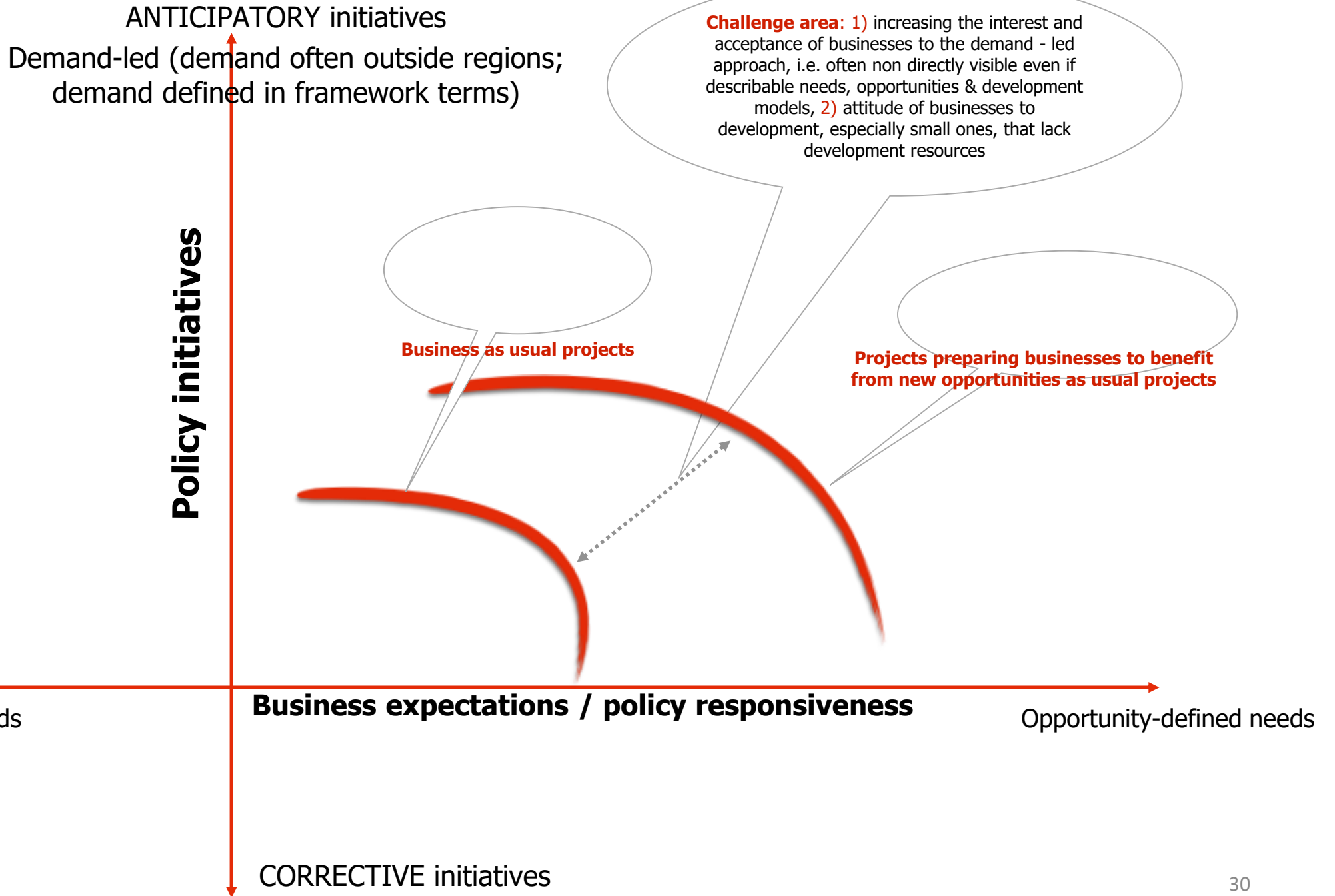
Summary of the improvement needs/potential based on the regional innovation maps

Innovation maps findings	Research to business	Research-to-industry	Research-to- regional innovation system
Types of actions	1) Joint product development; 2) commercialisation of research; 3) Interregional value chains	1)Comprehensive modernisation programmes (strategic documents); 2) Ad hoc research services to businesses; 3) Programme and projects for KET applications; 4) Introduce systematic 'upstreaming' and 'downstreaming', Annex I CPR 2014-2020; 5) increase TRL, 6) Standardisation, 7) IPR-based branding,	Centres of competence & RTOs (institutional level); 2) Linking centres of competence and RTOs to businesses (programme/project level); 3) Innovation management chain (service level)
Funding	1)Inter-regional programme level (H2020, EUREKA, Interreg); 2) Inter-regional project level (ZIM, BRIDGES, CENTROPE); 3) national innovation funds with interregional provisions	1)Comprehensive modernisation programmes (strategic documents); 2) Ad hoc research services to businesses; 3) Programme and projects for KET applications; 4) Introduce systematic 'upstreaming' and 'downstreaming', Annex I CPR 2014-2020; 5) increase TRL, 6) Standardisation, 7) IPR-based branding,	1) Structural funds; 2) National innovation funds with interregional provisions

The action plan process



The steep learning curve in the BRIDGES project



Partner region	Action plans
Kainuu, FI	<p><u>Investment focus:</u> (a) Emerging industries based on lignine processing (circular economy); (b) Commercialisation of research results through internationalisation actions initiatives coordinated by the Intermediate Body; (iii) reinforcing linkages to RTOs.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> (i)The Bioeconomy Science Center (BioSC), located in Jülich (Nordrhein-Westfalen), added value: the concept of developing new industries; (ii) Traceability and Big Data for achieving European AgroFood Sector Smart Specialisation; (iii) CENTROPE innovation voucher.</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> (i) research-to-regional innovation system, (ii) research-to-industry, (iii) research-to-business.</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan:</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1565773671.pdf</p>
Lubelskie, PL	<p><u>Investment focus:</u> Increase the absorptiveness of the Regional Operational Programme innovation calls by increasing the innovation absorptive capacity of Agri-food SMEs; involvement of RTOs.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> AUTODIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR AGRO-SMEs</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> Research-to-business.</p> <p><u>Access to the action plan summary and key information:</u> Annex 2</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan:</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1565778266.pdf</p>
Helsinki – Uusimaa, FI	<p><u>Investment focus:</u> Increase the commercialisation base of Uusimaa-based research through internationalisation initiatives coordinated by the Intermediate Body; reinforcing linkages to RTOs.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> (i) Large research infrastructure services for SMEs (Science Link & Baltic TRAM projects); (ii) CENTROPE innovation voucher.</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> (i) Research-to-business; (ii) research – to- industry.</p> <p><u>Access to the action plan summary and key information:</u> Annex 2</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan:</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1566302341.pdf</p>
West Macedonia, GR	<p><u>Investment focus:</u>(i) improving competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of selected agri-food product lines; (ii) improving RIS3 management and goivernance tools; (iii) introducing transregional 'innovation on demand' tools and innovation partnerships as part of the West Macedonia Regional Operational Programme.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> (i)AUTODIAGNOSTIC TOOL; (ii) HURC platform by the PP4 good practice Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council RIS3 coordination; (iii) CENTROPE innovation voucher.</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> (i) Research-to-business; (ii) research – to- industry; (iii) Other: MA RIS3 management tools.</p> <p><u>Access to the action plan summary and key information:</u> Annex 2</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan :</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1565778528.pdf</p>
Goriška, SI	<p><u>Investment focus:</u> To ensure both good state of the ecosystems and development of new products in the sustainable aquaculture industry.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> KANTOLA industrial estate and centre of competence.</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> (i) Research-to-business; (ii) Research-to-industry; (iii) Research-to-regional innovation system.</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan:</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1564654691.pdf</p>
Western Transdanubia, HU	<p><u>Investment focus:</u> Digitalisation of the wood processing, furniture industry; establishment of a thematic regional innovation platform.</p> <p><u>Good practices transferred:</u> (i)AUTODIAGNOSTIC TOOL; (ii) KANTOLA industrial estate and centre of competence.</p> <p><u>Type of mismatch addressed:</u> (i) Research-to-business; (ii) Research-to-regional innovation system.</p> <p><u>Access to the full action plan:</u> https://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1565169704.pdf</p>

Access to transferred good practices

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/1648/the-bioeconomy-science-center-biosc-located-in-juelich-nordrhein-westfalen/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/162/traceability-and-big-data-for-achieving-european-agrofood-sector-smart-specialisation/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/11/centrope-innovation-voucher/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/157/autodiagnostic-tool-for-agro-smes/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/8/large-research-infrastructure-services-for-smes-science-link-baltic-tram-projects/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/11/centrope-innovation-voucher/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/157/autodiagnostic-tool-for-agro-smes/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/252/helsinki-uusimaa-regional-council-ris3-coordination/>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/11/centrope-innovation-voucher/>