

Minutes of the 4th Steering Committee meeting of the Smart specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation



The 4th Steering Committee of the Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation took place on 27th November 2018 in Bilbao, Spain and was co-organised together with the Basque Government.

The meeting was open for the first time also to representatives of partnerships developed under the S3P Agri-food and Energy platform in view to facilitate potential synergies across all partnerships.

The opening discussion stressed that the S3 platform for industrial modernisation is being increasingly recognised as a promising instrument to foster industrial competitiveness and investments across all EU countries. Its scope has been recently extended to cover non-technology driven but emerging areas such as social innovation.

Regarding smart specialisation, it was underlined that although S3 strategies have started to create a positive impact in developing stronger regional ecosystems, there is still a certain fragmentation of efforts made by each region. Interregional cooperation could help to address this issue and the thematic S3 platforms are a promising approach towards this objective. At the same time, interregional cooperation contributes refining existing smart specialisation strategies and accelerating their implementation through mutual learning and continuous cooperation.

The dedicated Pilot Actions intend to address the issue of Valley of Death and accelerate the development and commercialisation of innovative products. The recent EC proposal under the new European Territorial Cooperation Programme - the so-called Interreg V component - would aim to address this innovation gap in the EU notably through interregional cooperation and investments.



The keynote speech by [Professor Kevin Morgan](#) addressed the impact of S3 on industry in terms of strategic priorities, framework conditions, R&D funding, and innovation ecosystems. Professor Kevin Morgan highlighted why interregional cooperation is key in supporting industrial development and the creation of new value chains. He highlighted however that the interregional dimension is still facing several barriers including:

- Lack of a clear political support for projects going beyond regional/ national borders;
- Lack of knowledge how to map and match interregional potentials;
- Lack of an integrated EU policy support to support interregional investments; the existing synergies between H2020 and ESIF seems to be not enough to support such projects;
- Strong and continuous engagement of companies.

The Steering Committee has also welcomed for the first time a representative from the business community, [David Tacconi](#), to present his experience on working with regional authorities and his opinion regarding interregional cooperation and investments from a business point of view.

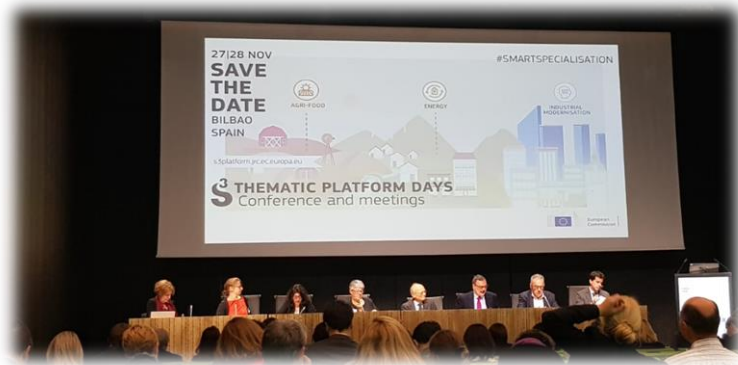
Mr Tacconi worked on the e-health and ICT research field for 5 years and founded his own company CoRehab in 2012 that benefited from a regional programme for innovation developed by the Trentino Sviluppo regional development agency. His company has also been supported by the EIT Digital and won the 2013 EIT innovation award. It is currently involved in the ClusSport partnership of the Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Cooperation.



Overview of the 7 new partnerships that joined the S3P Industry community

- 1) **Artificial Intelligence and Human Machine Interface** intends to support the adoption of Artificial Intelligence enhancing cyber-physical systems: more specifically AI driven Human-Machine interfaces, exploitation of the knowledge, competencies and capacities of the stakeholders of participating regions to accelerate the innovation processes of companies, including SMEs.
- 2) **Social Economy** aims at stimulating inter-regional operations for mutual, social enterprises and cooperatives as well as for other social innovation actors such as research institutions, etc., to enable them to use the full potential of the Internal Market in order to expand the activities of social economy, through interregional collaboration activities. Actions should encompass the financially supporting inter-regional operations via EU programmes and

collect best practices regarding incentives to stimulate their growth in the Internal Market and widely diffusing them.



- 3) **European Cyber Valleys** would like to develop interregional cooperation in order to create synergies among the existing specialized regions in cybersecurity, facilitate the development of EU cybersecurity value chain, and address the challenges that hamper commercialisation of existing and new products and services in Europe, foster business investment on cybersecurity. The partnership is part of the DG REGIO pilot action.
- 4) **Personalised medicine** was established to realise the potential of personalised medicine. This partnership will be complementary to the thematic platform on Medical Technologies and will bring the agenda to implement personalised medicine to the next level.
- 5) **Safe and sustainable mobility** set up as the main objective of the proposed thematic area gathering the industrial challenges involved in the transition towards decarbonisation and digitalisation of the road transport system. This transition is expected to have a disruptive impact in the SME competitiveness and thus in the socio-economic regional environment.
- 6) **Advanced materials for batteries** will make an effort to develop joint R&D&I projects on topics of advanced materials, their characterisation, durability, suitable for extreme working conditions with the goal to deploy them in the field of batteries. Batteries here are electro-chemical products with the final goal of enabling electro-mobility and enhancing the capacity and performance of stationary energy storage.
- 7) **Chemical industries partnership's** main objective is the modernization of the chemical industry to a sustainable, energy- and resource efficient sector that is globally competitive and that provides innovative solutions. The collaboration under this thematic area has been developed on the ground of the inter-regional partnership formed under the European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN).

The investment ideas session

In this session, a number of investments ideas have been presented from the following partnerships:

- 1) **The [3D printing partnership](#) Vanguard partnership** provided information on a regional funding in the Demo Case on Multi-materials components by hybrid 3D Printing. The regional scheme for stakeholders from the Örebro country (SE) can be used to finance activities carried out in Emilia Romagna (IT). The next step is to upscale this exercise among all partner regions in the Vanguard Initiative 3DP Pilot Project.
- 2) **The partnership on [Photonics](#)** presented €232Mio program to support the European Photonics Alliance strategy implementation. €75Mio already comes from industry, and €60Mio from public investment. There is ambition of 4.000 FTE and € 1Billion investment in 2026. The funds are open to all member of the EPA and will be used to create one-stop-shop for (integrated) photonics solutions, creating demo's fast (lab-to-fab), connect to supply

chains of large players, as a catalyst to forge strong relationships, scaling in manufacturing as essential to create significant profits in applications and services, accelerate Pan European innovation and research agenda, protect IP, leverage at system level: large players deal long term with ecosystems, they buy individual companies.

- 3) **The [Sport](#) partnership** informed about its quite advanced work on the identification of their 5 projects for co-investments. They are grounded in the bottom up development of investment projects basing on the input from regional stakeholders and clusters. The project *Smart Vital Urban Areas/Cities* face the societal health challenges by creating a quadruple helix-cluster at a cross-regional level to foster public-private investments in innovative projects to create smart vital areas/cities.



- 4) **The [MedTech](#) Smart Manufacturing** partnership presented an investment idea dealing with the creation of a “virtual network” of technologies, skills and capacities, fostering an operational multiregional ecosystem of stakeholders, competencies and facilities supporting the uptake of med-tech value chains at EU levels. Up to now three co-investment projects have been identified: Centre for Biocompatibility, Healthcare 4.0, and Medtech NETHub.
- 5) **The [Chemicals](#) partnership** shared the concept of trilateral regions cross-border cooperation programme including 9 co-investments addressing 7 themes of interests (challenges) which should lead to build shared technology centre, improvement of HR skills, large scale-up pilots and demos projects.

The plenary sessions were followed by the four parallel sessions that aimed to provide space for discussion in challenging areas expressed by partnerships.

Parallel sessions

The parallel session on [IPR in interregional collaborations](#) was to give an overview on the relevant intellectual property issues in the context of interregional collaboration projects involving both industrial partners and research institutions. The session aimed at providing a comprehensive analysis of concrete intellectual property aspects and challenges that need to be addressed when forming interregional collaboration and answer questions related to how IP rules can be agreed, how IP regimes can be defined and how strategic protection and exploitation models can be applied in collaboration activities.

The parallel session on [skills and training module development](#) was organised to provide an overview on skill gaps identification, training module development and training module certification. It was presented how educational needs can be anticipated based on labour market needs and offered overview on methodologies how to anticipate educational needs, industries and occupations

(newly emerged or changing) when examined as integrated wholes that support people with qualifications from all levels of education and training.

The parallel session on [Synergies between European Strategic Value Chains initiatives, European Strategic Cluster Partnerships and Thematic partnerships](#) discussed how interregional partnerships, established under the Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation, and clusters can be better linked to and cooperate with cross-regional industrial value chains, or create new European value chains. This will help interregional partnerships identify investment needs and opportunities, which exist along value chains, and which could be further analysed and tackled under the Smart Specialisation Platform for industrial Modernisation. In this context, different on-going actions have been presented together with relevant initiatives implemented at National and Regional level. The session also discussed what issues should be addressed by and types of actions should be developed in next programming period.

The parallel session on [Digital Innovation Hubs](#) (DIHs) focused on the role of DIHs as a policy instrument within the Digitising European Industry (DEI) initiative - first industry-related initiative of the Digital Single Market package. The progress made on the DIH policy instrument and future plans for 2021-2027 has been presented, including the Commission proposals for the new Digital Europe and Horizon Europe programmes. Also there was a concrete example of a regional DIH from the Region of Andalusia showcasing a multi-actors approach that provides an activity centre for creating, anticipating, managing and accelerating digital innovation in the Agri-food value chain.

Concluding remarks

The steering committee has confirmed the openness and commitment of partnerships to learn together and learn from each other and again resulting in a constructive dialogue between the Commission and stakeholders representing the 18 qualified partnerships.

Participants have been kindly invited to express their feedback regarding the event and future Steering committees in a [survey](#). Also participants can express their interest in themes related to IPR and skills in the same questionnaire.

To foster the participation of the Eastern European countries in the S3P Industry, the 5th Steering Committee meeting could be organised in the one of Eastern countries in Q2.

The European Commission would like to thank the host organisation for the excellent organisation of this event, and all the regions for their active participation and cooperation.

The S3 Platform team