



Newsletter

 **SMART
EUROPE**

ISSUE N.2

Editorial

Dear reader,

The first half year of SMART EUROPE has already passed. The project partners have used this time to identify good practices and to organize SMART EUROPE cafés in their regions. In these café meetings we have discussed with the stakeholders the pathways to create more innovation-based jobs. Obviously, there is no one-size-fits-all strategy for all regions, but three main focus areas have emerged:

- the creation of new innovative companies;
- innovation in traditional sectors and/or non-metropolitan areas;
- the creation of innovative hubs (like science parks, clusters, incubators).

Besides keeping you posted on the developments of the SMART EUROPE project, each newsletter will zoom in on one of these focus areas. In this 2nd newsletter the focus will be on science parks as a means to create intensive-knowledge jobs, with examples from Manchester, Patras and Flevoland.

Best regards,



Jan-Nico Appelman

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Province of Flevoland

Lead Partner

www.flevoland.nl

Assembly of European Regions

www.aer.eu

Manchester Metropolitan University

www.mmucfe.co.uk

Veneto Region

www.regione.veneto.it

Veneto Innovazione

www.venetoinnovazione.it

Province of Bologna

www.provincia.bologna.it

Észak Alföld Regional Development Agency

www.eszakalfold.hu

Maramures County Council

www.cjmaramures.ro

Almi Foretagspartner Mitt AB

www.almi.se/mitt

Patras Science Park S.A.

www.psp.org.gr

The Baltic Institute of Finland

www.baltic.org

Avila County Council

www.diputacionavila.es

Sor – Trondelag County Authority

www.stfk.no



Thematic focus. Job creation in Science Parks



View of the Hong Kong Science Park

From mere locations to gateways for new technological opportunities, Science Parks are driving actors of a global knowledge economy.

Science parks can offer the right opportunities for start-ups or young companies to cultivate their entrepreneurial and technological ideas.

Far from being just real estate brokers, science parks provide a wide array of services and valuable networking/cross-fertilization opportunities to their tenants. A change in paradigm towards a model of science park that supports and takes care of the development of its tenants has occurred in recent years. In particular, the offer of services to facilitate private investments (venture capital etc.) in companies, is the new frontier.

Smart and forward-looking management and financial viability are two necessary factors contributing to a well-targeted growth. On the other hand, growth and reputation are key for science parks to be the perfect location for job-creation in technological or innovative sectors.

Moreover, being rooted in a specific local context,

science parks normally have strong interactions with their environment and play a role in the local economic development. For this reason science parks need to be connected to the implementation of regional innovation policies, though without neglecting an international or global reach.

Different models of science parks can be found throughout Europe. In this second issue of the SMART EUROPE newsletter, three different experiences are presented with a view to know where they stand in their growth path.

- A model of science park which is anchored to the territory and with a strong University-driven attitude (Patras Science Park);
- A thematic park with a business orientation (Geomatics Business Park);
- A well-developed organisational model, based on financial self-sustainability (Manchester Science Park).



Good practices from...



Patras Science Park

Patras Science Park is an organization established in 1989 according to the model of an incubator for New Technology Based Firms (NTBFs). It has been owned by the Greek Ministry of Finance since 2001. Its main scope is the provision, creation and development of appropriate infrastructures, financial conditions, mechanisms and services that will support and promote the creation, operation and development of technological innovative firms through processes of fast growth (spin-off, spin-out) and their cooperation with academic and research institutes. Today around 20 technology companies and one research centre are based in Patras Science Park. Daily more than 120 people work or cooperate with them. The main fields of interest include Energy, ICT and Pharmaceuticals.

Can you please give us an overview of the local context where PSP is located and of its ambitions for the coming years?

«PSP is located in the Region of Western Greece, and as such it faces certain strengths and weaknesses within this regional innovation context. It has access to an excellent talent pool and to a highly educated labour force, being close to higher education and research institutes with a high-tech focus, as well as to organized industrial areas, offering R&D expertise in ICT, Pharmaceuticals, Nanotechnologies, RES, Chemicals. At the same time the Region of Western Greece faces the problem of coordination between research centres and firms, with local and national bodies, as well as in finding financial mechanisms to strengthen the innovative effort.

Its ambitions for the future are:

- Strengthening of infrastructure to broaden the establishment and development of NTBFs;
- Strengthening its role as the hub for the transfer of knowledge and technology from the academic and research institutions in NTBFs;
- Improving the quality of existing services and providing new high quality services to the companies it hosts;
- Coordinating individual efforts and contributing to the

funding of NTBFs (start-up, spin-off and clusters) that develop and exploit, especially through synergies, the increasing knowledge economies of scale.

- Creating suitable economic conditions and a competitive environment to become an area for innovation and entrepreneurship, mainly attracting investment from abroad. The Private Sector and Regional Authorities, with their new responsibilities and institutional character, have an important role in this sense».

What is the main criteria for selecting start-ups that locate in PSP?

«Candidate firms (start-ups, spin-offs, spin-outs) should exploit the results derived in the university and research centre labs and have the following characteristics:

- Innovative, technology driven companies;
- Research and Development Business Units;
- Research Institutes;
- Cluster Initiatives;
- International Companies or their affiliates focusing on innovation, research and technology development.

The process for a candidate firm to join PSP begins with the submission of an application along with a brief Business Plan. The acceptance of the firm by the Board of Directors initiates the membership procedures that give the firm access to an abundant infrastructure of facilities and machinery, as well as administrative, financial and marketing services and access to the strategic alliances PSP holds».

PSP is small in terms of size and its dependence on public subsidies does not allow for further growth. Are there other options on the table which could allow expanding the dimension and the perspectives of the PSP?

The assumption that PSP is dependent on public subsidies is not correct. For the past 6 years, PSP income resides in rents and its participation in European Projects. Therefore, among the important inhibitors for its expansion is the lack of public subsidies. In addition, the current ownership structure of PSP does not allow flexibility in deciding and implementing such strategic steps. Expanding, not only in terms of physical but also in terms of virtual space and offering a differentiated variety of services is among the strategic directions PSP intends



Good practices from...



PROVINCIE FLEVOLAND

Geomatics Business Park

to follow. However, it is firstly imperative to change its ownership structure. More specifically, and given its current ownership status, it is utterly dependent on the Central Government Authorities and as a result of that, initiatives with regional context are often circumvented by the well known rigidities of the central administrations. It should be noted that PSP administration is constantly working towards providing local enterprises with as many services as possible in order to make them competitive against the global markets».

Can you provide a successful case of a start-up grown inside the Science Park?

Brite Solar was established in Mid. 2009 with R&D facilities in Patras Science Park and Marketing/Sales in the US. The members of the executive team have international experience in the research of nanomaterials (Dr. P. Lianos, Dr. H. Stathatos) and large scale manufacturing and global distribution (Dr. N. Kanopoulos). Brite Solar is developing Solar Panel Technology based on Dye Sensitized Solar Cells, using new composite organic / inorganic lightweight nanostructured materials. Their semi-transparent solar cells are aimed to be used as solar glass walls, or windows, embedded in a building's architecture. They own a patent for a solar module which allows similar performance to that of thin film solar panel at significantly reduced cost.

<http://www.psp.org.gr/>

<http://www.britesolar.com/>



Konstantinos Tsekouras

President & CEO of Patras Science Park

Since 2002, the Geomatics Business Park (GBP) is a business and science park supported by a mix of public and private funding. It is located in Flevoland, near to the National Aerospace Laboratory NLR. Typical tenants are companies and knowledge institutions working in the field of earth observation, geo-information and information technology. The use of earth observation data is a rapidly growing market, with a broad field of employment, such as coastal defence, water and soil management, air quality, precision agriculture, ecology and the management of (vital) civil infrastructure.

Geomatics is increasingly employed in business as well, both on a national and international level. For starting enterprises in a new market it is often difficult to find a proper location that offers both the technical infrastructure and easy access to high-tech institutions. The GBP fills this gap and provides financial support for rapid development of innovative products and services.

GBP is a science and business park. Which of the two components, research and business, is prevalent? How do the different souls of the park interact?

Geomatics is a new innovative sector that is essentially based on research and business. The National Aerospace Laboratory (NLR) is a research partner. The concept of the GBP is based on the fact that the GBP should be an incubator for commercial companies and research institutes. (Starting) SME's don't have big budgets to spend and that is the reason why GBP appealed to the ERDF funds to co-finance the research activities component. This was realized by incorporating them in an ERDF programme in which the companies act on the basis of market expectations of innovative products and services. Nowadays our yearly turnover exceeds 20 million euro, which means a multiplier of a factor of 20 for each invested ERDF euro.

Why is Flevoland the place to be for geomatics? Which factors do you consider more attractive for companies to invest and locate in Flevoland?

The presence of the NLR is a starting point in Flevoland. The geomatics sector was identified and encouraged at an



Good practices from...

early stage by the Province of Flevoland. The Province of Flevoland stimulated geomatics as a sector and had the (financial) recourse to stimulate its growth. As a result, Flevoland is a frontrunner in the Netherlands in the field of geomatics, and is nationally acknowledged as the leading region to implement geomatics products and services based on space data.



Which type of market do the companies located in the GBP address? Are they supported in facing international competition?

The geomatics market is international per definition. Almost every company located in the GBP operates on the international market. For instance, last year GBP was invited to participate in a trade mission to China organised by the Province of Flevoland. Examples of products include: providing environmental information, water quality information, marine information, air quality information, precision agriculture (GPS), defence, off-shore and oil industry, wind energy output forecasting and much more.

In 10 years, over a dozen private companies located in the GBP and almost 100 hundred knowledge-intensive jobs were created. These numbers are below the initial expectations. Which critical factors can you identify and is there a plan to foster the creation of new jobs in the GBP?

The director partially disagrees. In the first period, the GBP performed well and far beyond it's objectives, but after this very successful period, the growth in Flevoland was slightly below its expectations. Apart from the financial crisis – which means that governmental investments for



instance in new infrastructure are reduced - this is due to the changing business models: the specialized geomatics companies merge with bigger, international companies, and as a consequence the growth of employability does not necessarily take place in Flevoland. Now we are trying to become a player within the Dutch top sector High Tech Systems and Materials (HTSM). Space was included as a roadmap in this top sector and is considered an enabler for innovations in Food and Agriculture, Water and Energy. The GBP initiates new geomatics based services in these sectors which are important for the economics of Flevoland as well, for instance wind energy output predictions based on accurate meteorological wind forecasting, precision agriculture and maritime information.

<http://www.geomaticspark.com/en>



Gert van den Burg
Director of Geomatics Business Park



Manchester Science Park

Manchester Science Parks (mps) has been providing the workspace, facilities and environment to support the growth of innovative companies in Greater Manchester for nearly 30 years. Our mission is to support the development of the knowledge-based economy within the Manchester city region by providing appropriate space and added value services to companies in high technology sectors such as ICT, biotechnology, industrial technology and digital media. There are over 165 companies based across msp's sites, employing approximately 1400 people. Our customers range from sole traders to the European headquarters of multinational companies and they are more internationally connected, more innovative and more commercially successful than the average company in Greater Manchester.

msp has a long experience in supporting innovative companies in different sectors. When and how was it able to gain the strong international reputation it holds today?



Good practices from...

We have developed a strong brand and worked hard to establish and maintain productive international links and networks, such as with the International Association of Science Parks. Our staff attend and present at relevant overseas conferences and write papers on best practice worldwide. We work closely with UKTI and MIDAS and have a special soft landing offer for international companies within our Manchester International Innovation Centre. <http://www.mspl.co.uk/soft-landing-schemes.html>

How does msp encourage and support the creation of local innovative businesses? (services, facilitations, attraction of potential investors etc.)

A science park is an organisation managed by specialised professionals, whose aim is to increase the wealth of its community by promoting a culture of innovation and the competitiveness of its associated businesses and knowledge-based institutions. At msp we provide a range of value added services aimed at strengthening clusters of companies in specialist sectors which provide opportunities for employment to the local community and create an environment where talent can flourish.

A key part of our offer is an 'intelligent brokerage' service which guides businesses to the most appropriate source of business support whether from the public, private or academic sector and organising networking events to build a community of colleagues who can provide mutual support, and identify business opportunities. msp acts as an active intermediary to optimise opportunities for businesses to access the support they need to grow and succeed. We work closely with the city region's inward investment organisation, MIDAS, to attract inward investment to the area and use our own international connections to support targeted programmes, such as the development of Citylabs on Oxford Road as an internationally recognised bio-medical business location.



<http://citylabs.co.uk/>

Can you give us an overview of the general profile/s of companies located in MSPs? In particular, in relation to innovative jobs creation?



At the end of 2011 the msp community across its 4 sites in Greater Manchester consisted of 153 companies. The two predominant sectors were ICT- 34% of tenants fell into this category- and bio-medical and healthcare, represented by 26% of tenants.

In 2011, 60.3% had a higher turnover than the previous year. 40.6% also recorded an increase in the number of employees. 34.8% stated they expanded over the last year i.e. taken more space or opened new branches.

During 2011, 37 tenant companies developed new products /services. Consequently, 192+ products / services were developed, of which 153+ were introduced into the market.

1015 FTE individuals were collectively employed by msp. 300 of these were routinely engaged in R&D activities. 178 were alumni from universities in Greater Manchester.

msp's business model is based on a self-sustaining approach, as the public funding option was excluded since the beginning. How the local economic context did favour this model, and do you think it is replicable in less industrialized/wealthy areas in Europe?

Manchester has a very joined up strategic approach to supporting knowledge-based economic development in the Manchester city region so, self-sustainability aside, the value of having the city support our development cannot be underestimated and, even in less wealthy or industrialised areas, collaboration across a political landscape is valuable to the success of a science park.

How do you envision the future of msp in 20 years time?

We have some ambitious growth plans in terms of doubling the size of our original location and development of the site as an innovation hub.

<http://www.mspl.co.uk/>

*Anne Dornan - Innovation Manager
Manchester Science Park*



Resources

Hungary/Észak-Alföld

<http://www.xanga.hu/dipa/?lang=eng>

The Industrial Park of Debrecen Academy Ltd. (DIPA Ltd.) is a project company of the Xanga Company Group aiming to attract further investors to the town of Debrecen by creating new industrial areas and thus creating new jobs.

http://www.delog.hu/?lang=eng_

The name 'Trans-Sped Group' has meant exclusively 'transportation, warehousing, customs clearance' in logistics profession for a long time. Delog Ltd, the head company of the Group, operates an industrial park, as well.

<http://www.pip.info.hu/index.php>

Polgár Industrial Park offers light industry halls and warehouses to rent, as well as plots for sale business-friendly administration, and match the training of the local vocational school to the skills needs of the tenants of the industrial park.

Sweden/Mid-Sweden

Mid Sweden Science Park AB

<http://www.mssp.se/>

Mid Sweden Science Park AB (MSSP AB) was founded in 2007 and is a development arena that aims to strengthen the support systems for the region's research and business environments. MSSP AB runs the Peak Innovation project.

<http://www.peakinnovation.se/en/>

Peak Innovation is Jämtland region's investment in future growth. Peak Innovation stimulates research and business development in the areas of tourism, sports and the outdoors.

The aim is to create growth in new and existing businesses, to produce more research results of commercial interest, to attract investment and to strengthen the region's brand and competitiveness.

Italy/Veneto Region

VEGA and GALILEO - the Science Parks in Veneto

<http://www.vegapark.ve.it/en>

The VEnice GATeway for Science and Technology – is one of the most important Science and Technology Parks in Italy, active in the most advanced sectors of technological innovation: Nanotechnologies, Information Communication Technology (ICT), and the Green Economy.

<http://www.galileopark.it/en.html>

GALILEO is a Science and Technology Park based in Padua. Galileo's mission consists in sustaining the competitive skills of enterprises through the implementation of activities and services to support innovation.

The Netherlands/Province of Flevoland

<http://www.nlr.nl/>

NLR is the aerospace knowledge enterprise in the Netherlands. NLR's facilities include wind tunnels, research aircraft, military and civil flight simulators, ATM tower and radar simulators and a wide variety of research and development capabilities.

<http://www.acrres.nl/>

ACRRES in Lelystad is the national centre for the application of sustainable energy and green raw materials. Objective of this initiative is to develop sustainable energy on the basis of sun, wind and biomass, in a joint effort with businesses, organisations, authorities and education.

<http://www.ppo.wur.nl/UK/>

Applied Plant Research (PPO) is the leading Dutch organisation for applied research in Arable Farming, Multifunctional Agriculture and Field Production of Vegetables, Flower Bulbs, Nursery Stock and Fruit.



Smart Cafès. Defining topic for Peer Reviews



271 PARTICIPANTS

VENETO REGION

Entrepreneurial culture and Innovation

The focus of the three round tables was how to support and boost the development of innovative start-up companies in the Veneto region. The main topics discussed were: Financial Instruments, New Markets and Entrepreneurship Culture.

The debate highlighted best proposals of action and recommendations to facilitate setting up new innovative companies and make them attractive for private investors. For example supporting Business Angels, boosting the creation of focused start up incubators, planning of integrated and long-term financial instruments, strengthening of networks. With regard



to opening to a wider and global market in order to find business opportunities and chances to grow, it was stressed that: it is key to create financial instruments aimed at internationalization, to raise the attractiveness of the local companies towards foreign markets, to create targeted initiatives to involve new workforce in new entrepreneurship opportunities, and to elaborate a coherent strategy to enhance cooperation among the key innovation actors.

Last but not least the education field (high schools, Universities...) needs of a strong linkage with the business and entrepreneurial world. In addition, the institutions ought to promote innovative forms of entrepreneurship. Vouchers, flexible contracts, extracurricular work activities, training sessions at the University have to be supported by the local public bodies and by the interested stakeholders in the territory (incubators, private investors...).

ÉSZAK-ALFÖLD REGION

Innovative job-creation in Észak-Alföld region



The meeting held in Debrecen, last May, boosted a discussion on the opportunities to facilitate the creation of innovation-based jobs. Following the presentation of the project Smart Europe and of the regional context, an active discussion took place about example of innovative job-creation in the region, such as the self-supplying village, HR cooperation of the university and a multinational company. The participants expressed their commitment to this important theme. All the feedbacks was positive, in particular, participants proposed potential solutions to reduce the unemployment rate in the region in different economic fields, such as local products, renewable energy, education and accessibility.



Smart Cafés. Defining topic for Peer Reviews

AVILA COUNTY COUNCIL

Innovation in the Agro-food sector through valorisation of sub-products

The Smart Europe Cafe held on 24th May in Avila got more attendants than previously foreseen, mostly it turned into an excellent opportunity to meet the stakeholders related with innovation in the Agro-food sector, as a first approach to the following stages of the project. Agro-food is one of the three bases for sustainable tourism, the main industry in the region. As a result of the Smart Europe Café, Avila County Council gained some useful contacts related with innovation at national and regional, which will be of a true added value when involving regional stakeholders within the meeting to be held in Avila in Spring 2013 as well as during the peer review week itself.

Attendants came from the agro-food sector: technological research centres, companies, technological institutes and farm owners.

Participants discussed the potential value of agro products and the possible involvement and collaboration with the Technological Centres.

The need for a common valorisation of the products and the importance of carrying on joint actions together with the agro food SME's was expressed. It was suggested to create a common brand under the umbrella for marketing actions, quality standards and joint actions.



PROVINCE OF FLEVOLAND

Further developing clusters to create innovation-based jobs

The Flevoland SMART Cafè was held in Lelystad last June and offered the opportunity to discuss about further developing clusters in Flevoland as a means to create innovation-based jobs. An expert, specialised in cluster development, analysed the current clusters in Flevoland, their strengths and weaknesses and the potential for growth. He advised to strengthen the ties with SME's and to liaise with related clusters in other regions, in order to become a significant player in the field, nationally and internationally.



Participants, policy makers from regional and local government, representatives from cluster organisations, educational institutes and companies discussed about possible solutions to improve the cooperation between SME's and cluster organisations, to improve the cooperation with clusters in other regions and internationally, to strengthen the role of the educational institutes in the clusters and they proposed to seek advice from the peer review team.



Smart Cafès. Defining topic for Peer Reviews

MARAMURES COUNTY

Innovative anchors in Maramures County



The focus of the SMART CAFÉ, held in Baia Mare the 14th of June 2012, was to identify the „innovative anchors” and regional

stakeholders with a potential to generate opportunities for innovation based jobs.

During the meeting the Innovation Plan for Maramures county was presented, which is a direct result of the MINI EUROPE project. The Innovation Plan proposed the creation of a Cluster for ECTT (Education, Research, Technological Transfer) closely connected to the North University Baia Mare, situated in the North Western part of the town. A project proposal of the Centre for SMEs Development and the Municipality of Baia Mare was also discussed in order to obtain financing for the development of Competitive Poles in the POS CCE Program (Increasing Economical Competitiveness). The project aims at setting up an industrial park in the eastern industrial part of the town. At the present the documentation for phase 1 is being prepared: strategy and project files. There are several opportunities for this town that is ranked as a pole of development for the NV Region and there are several opportunities for the Metropolitan area of Baia Mare that is foreseen to develop its research infrastructure and an industrial park.

The steps made by the representatives of CIT- Centre for Technological Innovation from the North University, concerning the standards in the field of innovation were also taken into account. Four working groups were created (technological transfer, innovation management, innovation property and economical-financial capacity). In a year's time, at national level a new standard for defining the notion of innovation, invention, innovation management technological transfer, etc., is expected to be elaborated. Also, the development of a new employment standard in the field of innovation is foreseen.

There is a need to diversify the local industry and services in

order to penetrate other markets and better representing local products (especially the dairy industry) on the local markets. At present the local market is dominated by foreign products.

As a result of the open discussions, the participants agreed upon the fact that the innovative anchors for Maramures County are represented by a combination of companies from the processing industry, the university and organizations that sustain the development of SME's. It has been established that there is a need for future similar meetings, as it is necessary to bring together representatives from each domain that can contribute to stimulating innovation jobs. On the occasion of the Smart Cafè, it has a communicational group was also set up: <https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/smart-cafe-maramures>

TAMPERE REGION

Smart specialisation in Tampere Region

The topic of the meeting was the smart specialisation strategy in the Tampere Region, participants widely discussed the strategy and its potential for development. One of the issues raised and discussed was the level of specialisation (i.e. city vs. province) to be used in the future in strategy work. The preparation of the regional smart specialisation strategy in Tampere Region was introduced together with background to this strategy work. The processes that are already ongoing in the area and processes that are being developed were explained and discussed. The Tampere Region S3 -strategy is still under work and there is a need for some more strategic decisions regarding its focus. It was agreed that SMART EUROPE will work together with other regional projects in tackling the issues of creating and maintaining innovation based jobs. At the meeting, participants highlighted the need to make the decisions regarding the future specialisation strategy together with a level of specialisation as effective as possible.





Smart Cafès. Defining topic for Peer Reviews

MID SWEEDEN

Anchors and interest groups

The Almi SMART Cafè held in the county of Jämtland with the aim to create an interest group composed of policy makers, organisations such as Science parks and Business Agency's that would guide and provide information dissemination to region regarding Smart Europe and the Policy regarding Innovation in the Mid Sweden region.

Participants (policy makers, academia, project managers and entrepreneurs) discussed in an open and creative dialogue about the launch of new innovative companies, focusing on how they can best take advantage of the knowledge and experience from project partners from other European countries. It is important to identify anchors and interest groups in Mid Sweden making reference to Science Parks and close partners.



The event gave the floor to entrepreneurs in order to better understand their point of view regarding Innovation and creativity as an engine for development and competitiveness within a more and more complicated open market.

During the presentation of the businesses involved, Innovative enterprises clearly gave the idea that Innovation and creativity are relevant elements to survive in this critical Economic moment and that the public – private partnership is felt as fundamental to get support as well as useful information like the services provided by the Province of Bologna via the BAN network, via Progetti d'impresa and via Incredibol - project promoted by Municipality of Bologna.

PATRAS

Business culture and education

The topic of the meeting in Patras was how to create new jobs through innovative entrepreneurship in the Region of Western Greece.

More specifically the sub-themes of the discussion (brainstorming) that took place were: the support the creation of Greek New Technology Based Firms (GNTBFs) and, the promotion of a business culture and education of potential entrepreneurs.

Participants discussed about problems and possible solutions, in Western Greece there is a pool of highly

PROVINCE OF BOLOGNA

New Innovative and Creative SMEs

The SMART CAFE was hosted at Palazzo Gnudi, in the city centre of Bologna and involved many key stakeholders and representatives of Public Administration: Aster, CNA Emilia-Romagna, CNA Bologna, EmiliaRomagnaStartUp, Incredibol - Municipality of Bologna.



Smart Cafè. Defining topic for Peer Reviews

specialized human capital, in this context, it was deemed useful to map the supply and demand of innovation stakeholders and to record the Institutional channels for cooperation in terms of innovation and entrepreneurial activities. Based on the above, the technology transfer office of the University of Patras is responsible for constructing an information system for the technology transfer among stakeholders.

However there are strong problems of communication and coordination among stakeholders and they need to establish the institution of Innovation Cafes, with the contribution from other stakeholders who either have analogous previous experience and/or are specialized in these kind of activities.



Finally, there are different views on how to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the region of Western Greece. There is a need for further investigation of the possibility and scope of the establishment of an Innovation Hub in the Municipality of Patras in order to link electronically the local market with the global innovation platforms and demand, in cooperation with the innovation anchors (Region of Western Greece and the Municipality of Patras).

MANCHESTER

Growth in the innovation based sector

The focus of the Smart Café in Manchester was to identify the key issues that are facing Manchester in relation to encouraging growth in the innovation based sector. Participants discussed innovation in its widest sense. They examined a number of issues including existing partnerships, informal and formal networks, the role of industry and the wider private sector, the role of

individual owner managers of SMEs, public procurement, communication between agencies, access to finance and risk taking in the public sector, existing strategies and governance currently in place and how this is working since the removal of Regional Development Agencies in the England. The discussions focused on what works and what doesn't. It was actively encouraged a frank and open debate to try to identify the key issues. They also started to identify key events over the next 2 years which Smart Europe may be useful as a tool to assist them with a wider work to promote innovation, employment creation and growth, including how it might link to the development of the Regional Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation for Greater Manchester which will be necessary to have in place before the new Structural Fund programmes come into effect in 2014. Manchester's Smart Café targeted and included a range of policy makers and stakeholders in the sub region from both the public and private sector. They discussed about the need to capture the passion of individuals in driving innovation, those that effectively create growth and jobs, e.g. company owners, and also assess the effectiveness of both informal as well as formal business networks and how they are funded to satisfy the request of existing partnership arrangements, range of networks and effective communication.



The problem is the range of source and complexity of entry points for business to access finance so they need to assess how they can make it easier for the business community to access finance.

There are problems of public procurement and links to SMEs. Solutions are more linkages between the private and public sector and opportunities to drive growth through procurement opportunities.



Spotlight

Outlook on Tampere “Seminar on SMART EUROPE Good Practices”

The first partner meeting of the SMART EUROPE project was arranged on 28-29 March 2012 by the Baltic Institute of Finland, in Tampere. The first day seminar was focused on introducing good practices of innovation based regional policies and c o n c r e t e a c t i o n s to boost economy and job creation in different



parts of Europe. Partners presented their experiences in supporting regional innovation-based employment.

In particular, Demola and the New Factory concepts were introduced by Mr. Ville Kairamo as good practices from the Tampere region for enhancing and facilitating new tools for university-business collaboration. In Demola, university students develop product and service demo concepts together with companies and create new solutions to real-life problems. Demola provides an inspiring atmosphere of creative co-creation and new learning opportunities for students and professionals of different universities and organisations. Demola also creates new spin-off companies around the innovations.

During the second day meeting, project partners shared regional experiences and discussed the peer review concept and methodology to be utilized in project activities.



Feedback from AER International Event

The Assembly of European Regions presented the SMART EUROPE project at the 2012 Ommegang festivities, an event held at the heart of Europe in Brussels every year. The ceremony was attended by tens of thousands of visitors from around the world who, this year, were able to experience the fact that Europe’s strength also lies in its regions. SMART EUROPE was introduced to the wider public alongside other initiatives by the AER member regions aiming to promote the regional dimension and to demonstrate best practices and regional expertise.



Smart Europe communication tools overview

Veneto Innovazione, project communication responsible, has realised some information and communication tools aiming to disseminate activities and results of Smart Europe project.

Click the picture to have a link to the download page!



<http://smart-europe.eu>



Coming soon...

Peer reviews (October 2012 -February 2013)

Flevoland/Eszak Alföld/Bologna/ Sør-Trøndelag/
Veneto

International conference

Avila, 17 - 19 April 2013

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Spotlight: news from SMART EUROPE

Coming soon: next Peer Reviews

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