



REPORT ON REGIONAL RESEARCH PRO- GRAMMES ON WORK AND LABOUR INNOVATION

Workshop in Bologna, 9-10 May 2005

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WORK-IN-NET

Labour and innovation: Work-oriented innovations – a key to better employment, cohesion and competitiveness in a knowledge-intensive society

Index

Foreword	5
1 Purpose and content of the report	6
2 The regional dimension	9
2.1 The different meanings of regional dimension	9
2.2 Relationships between regional and national level.....	12
2.3 Questions that emerged in the final discussion.....	14
3 Strategic Objectives	15
3.1 Questions that Emerged in the Final Discussion	21
4 Development partnership	21
4.1 Development partnership in practice	22
4.2 The role of tripartitism	23
4.3 Networking	25
4.4 Sub-regional needs.....	26
4.5 Questions that emerged in the course of the discussion.....	27
5 Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation	29
6 Challenges	31
7 Resources and Funding	32
8 Lisbon Strategy: Competitiveness, Quality and Social Cohesion	33
9 Topics for future discussion	34
10 Future activities	35
Annex I	37
Annex II	39

Foreword

This report is based on the main findings of the first regional workshop as part of the WORK-IN-NET project. The workshop organized by the Istituto per il Lavoro (Institute for Labour Foundation) was held in Bologna, May 9-10 2005.

WORK-IN-NET is a four-year (2004-08) project with the full title 'Labour and Innovation: Work-Oriented Innovations – a Key to Better Employment, Cohesion and Competitiveness in a Knowledge-Intensive Society'. The project is funded within the Sixth Research Framework Programme of the European Commission. The overall aim of WORK-IN-NET is to set up sustainable communication and co-operation channels in Europe between the still fragmented national and regional research activities in the area of work-related innovation issues. To cope with the lasting innovation, productivity and employment challenges in European countries, the focus of WORK-IN-NET lies on three key themes:

- qualitative human resource development,
- corporate social responsibilities and cultures, and
- regional development alliances.

Innovative interactions of all – national and regional - stakeholders and extended development coalitions are vital for achieving the goal set by the Lisbon European Council – to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and with greater social cohesion. Within the economic and technological changes towards globalization the regional dimension is gaining momentum.

The following pages offer an overview about the discussions during the workshop on regional research programmes. The main objective of this first meeting of regional experts was to foster a systematic exchange of information and good practices concerning existing regional research programmes on work oriented innovation and innovative development coalitions.

Claudio Zettel
- Coordinator -

1 Purpose and content of the report

The following pages offer an overview on what emerged during the workshop on regional research programmes, held in Bologna on 9-10 May 2005 organised by the Institute for Labour Foundation. The main objective of the meeting was to foster a systematic exchange of information and best practices concerning existing regional research programmes on work oriented innovation. The workshop represented a moment of interaction among the actors involved in the project, in which it was possible not only to go in depth into the Emilia-Romagna research programmes, but also to stimulate a mutual learning process on strategies and contents of the programmes. The participants to the Bologna workshop were:

- Institute for Labour Foundation
- The Ministry for Productive Activities of the Emilia-Romagna region
- The Ministry of Labour of the Emilia-Romagna region
- Vinnova, the Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems
- Project Management Organization at the German Aerospace Centre (PT-DLR) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- The Regionalagentur Ostwestfalen-Lippe: cooperation project between administration on the Federal State level and sub-regional-level, by G.I.B.
- The Organization for Innovative Employment Promotion (G.I.B.) on behalf of the Ministry of Economy and Labour Affairs of the German Federal State of North-Rhine Westphalia
- The Research Council of Norway
- The Work Research Institute of Norway
- The Rogoland Research Institute: the project “Development Coalition Hordaland and Rogoland” under the Value Creation 2010 Programme
- The Finnish Work Environment Fund
- The Finnish Workplace Development Programme (TYKES) by the Ministry of Labour
- Polish Academy of Sciences, EU Institute of Fundamental Technology Research

In the first day, after the fact-finding mission coordinated by the Research Council of Norway, the Bologna workshop organizer set aside time for the presentation of three case studies, in three different countries. The first case concerned the structure of the research programmes on work managed by the Ministry of Labour of Emilia-Romagna, Italy. The second case analyzed in detail a Norwegian regional

project (“The Development Coalition Hordaland and Rogoland”) under the Value Creation (VC2010) Programme. During the presentation of the third case, the representatives of the Regionalagentur Ostwestfalen-Lippe and the G.I.B. introduced an example of cooperation between programme administration on the Federal State level and sub-regional level, in Germany.

During the second day, the workshop participants opened a discussion on the results of the questionnaire that all the WORK-IN-NET partners were asked to fill out in preparation for the meeting. The discussion focused on the issues proposed by the workshop organizer (Institute for Labour) in his introduction:

1. Definition of regional level
2. Strategic objectives of regional research programmes
3. Regional research programmes and development partnerships
4. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes
5. Resources and funding mechanism

As already mentioned above, the discussion started by comparing the different profiles of the regional research programmes as they emerged in the questionnaire (hereinafter Regional Research Programme Questionnaire “RRPQ”). The RRPQ was forwarded to the participants by the Institute for Labour some weeks before the workshop, in order to allow the partners to collect specific information and to create a common basis for the discussion. In the following table, it is possible to find all the issues included in the RRPQ model.

Table 1- The Regional Research Programme Questionnaire (RRPQ)

<p><u>The regional dimension:</u></p> <p>How is the regional level defined in the various national contexts? Is there a link between regional and national research programmes? If yes, of what kind?</p>
<p><u>Research programmes and global competition:</u></p> <p>What are the strategic objectives of the regional research programmes? What are the research priorities? Research programmes on work-oriented innovations vs. social dumping (asianisation of income levels and working conditions') and tax dumping? What kinds of projects are financed? What are the target groups of regional research programmes? Are all sectors covered or do research programmes focus on specific sectors? What about sectors with no or weak presence of social partner organisations? In which way are Regions exposed to global competition? Do research programmes address the challenge of global competition, and, if yes, in which way?</p>
<p><u>Development partnerships:</u></p> <p>What are the most important stakeholder groups for regional research programmes with respect to goal setting of R&D on work-oriented innovations? (Have there been changes with regard to the past? Will there be changes in future?) Do the stakeholders only belong to the regional context or are there also external stakeholders? If yes, what role do they play and in which phase do they take part? How is it guaranteed that sub-regional needs have a voice in regional programmes? Are there procedures in order to take into consideration the interests of companies and workplaces? In what way do research programmes support the cooperation between different organisations and the creation of development partnerships? What are the means with which to promote networking? What organisations and institutions are involved in networking at the regional level? Have there been changes with regard to the past? Are there new tendencies?</p>
<p><u>Implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes</u></p> <p>How is the implementation of research programmes at the sub-regional level organised? Are there means with which to monitor and assess the success of regional research programmes in achieving the goals initially set?</p>
<p><u>Resources</u></p> <p>How are resources allocated and what are the funding mechanisms?.</p>
<p><u>General observations</u></p> <p>Are research programmes in line with the Lisbon Strategy? What goals do research programmes refer to? How is the relationship between competitiveness and social cohesion defined? Is there a priority of competitiveness related objectives? What is the role of sustainable development and social inclusion/cohesion? Are regional research programmes in line with national policy/national programmes? Are there contradictions?</p>

This report will attempt to keep the same structure of the discussion, in order to paint a reliable picture of the debate. The framework of the report will be so divided into 5 chapters. The first one contains an explanation of what the partners mean when speaking of regional level and which are the relationships between the national and regional level. The second and third chapter will deal with the strategic objectives and the development partnerships of research programmes respectively. The fourth chapter focuses on the mechanism and processes of monitoring and evaluation. The last chapter is more focused on the administrative aspect of the programmes: resources and funding mechanism.

2 The regional dimension

2.1 The different meanings of regional dimension

When speaking of Regional Research Programmes, it is of evident importance to understand what the different countries mean by using the adjective “Regional”. What is also important is to figure out which relationship runs between regional and national research programmes. Analyzing the questionnaires, five main categories of regional dimension are identifiable. The *first category* defines the regional dimension on the basis of administrative and political bodies which govern territorial development plans and employment pacts. Differently in the *second category* the regional dimension corresponds to functional cluster-building or networking in less developed areas inside a country. The *third category* of regional definition includes the interregional networks and the *fourth category* the international networks of regions. Finally, in the *fifth category* we analyze programmes at the regional level but with a global purpose.

Examples that could better fit the first category are the cases of Italy (Emilia-Romagna), Germany and Finland. In Italy, the concept of Region is associated with an administrative and institutional division of the national territory. Italy counts 20 regions and each of them has its own government that exercises power in coordination with the national level¹. The research programmes, promoted by the Emilia-Romagna Region only affect the territory that falls under the competences of the regional administrative body. In Germany, the Organisation for the Innovative Employment Promotion (GIB) is a regional Agency of the Federal State in North-Rhine Westphalia with the task of supporting activities of the Federal State government to promote Work Oriented Modernization. Also in this case the area of intervention is thus circumscribed within the Federal State borders. Similarly to the other two cases, also the Bremen Work and Technology Programme only impacts on the territory of the Federal State of Bremen. In Finland, there are 20 regional

¹ The distribution of powers between national and regional level now depends on the laws currently under discussion in the national Parliament

councils that are statutory joint municipal authorities operating according to the principles of local self-government. Each Council acts as a regional development and planning centre by means of which the regional interests are taken into consideration. Also in Poland there is a multilevel administrative system in which the regional dimension is represented by the so-called “voivodeships” (the national territory is divided in 16 regions).

There are also cases in which the applicability of the research programmes is within the political regional borders but the planning remains at the national level. Examples of these kind of National Programmes with a regional implementation can be found in several countries analyzed by the WORK-IN-NET group. In Sweden, for example, as well as in Norway, the counties represent the administrative “regional dimension” where the research activities are first induced by the national level. In Norway, the concept of regional dimension is under discussion right now. Given the small number of inhabitants (4 million), the existing 19 counties either will be grouped into 7-9 wider regions or will disappear, eliminating the intermediary role between local and national level.

With regard to the second category, there are two cases among those analyzed that can be taken as examples. First of all, the case of Germany where in the framework of the BMBF umbrella initiative „Entrepreneurial Regions“ (the beformer InnoRegion-Process) the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has started a range of regional networking initiatives in order to strengthen the competitiveness and innovation capabilities in the New Federal States (East Germany). These cooperation networks are to open up and further the development of technological innovation potentials and competences of the New Federal States, by creating a kind of positive benchmarking approach. Secondly, the case of Poland. On May 3 2000, the national Parliament approved an act about the rules of regional development support, in which the relationship between the central government and the local administration as well as the criteria for accessing public funds and identifying the target-regions were defined. All these elements were included in the National Strategy for Regional Development with the aim of, among others, compensating for differences in the development of individual areas of the country, reducing backwardness in poorly developed regions that have the most unfavourable development conditions.

The research programmes studied in the RRPQ highlighted how the area of application of the regional research activities not only affects one regional territory but can also be addressed to a group of regions and favour interregional networks inside the country (*the third category*). The Norwegian national programme *Value Creation (VC2010)* involves different regions at the same time, trying to combine, as in the *Development Coalition Hordaland and Rogoland* project, regions characterized by similar business and structural aspects. Also in Sweden, the central government assigned to the county administrative boards the task of initiating community committees for regional cooperation. In Germany, the „Entrepreneurial Re-

gions“ Process consists of three national programmes² and one of them regards specifically the creation of innovative clusters within and among regions: the Inter-regional Alliances for Markets of Tomorrow. When the research programme is directed to a specific industrial cluster or to a specific sector, more administrative regions can be involved in the research activities. Another example is the Polish *Area for Research and Economic Growth* specialized in High Tech (the *High Tech Valley*) that comprises two different regional areas: the Lower and the Upper Silesian. Besides the Regional Council (see above), in Finland there is also another administrative structure to define the regional level: the 15 Economic Development Centres in which all the efforts of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Labour converge in order to make Finland more dynamic and competitive. The Tykes programme (FWDP) cooperates with regional networks on three Economic Development Centres “to reach more generative results”.

The area of application of the research programmes can also cross the national borders to create international networks of regions (*fourth category*). The positive effect related to a cooperative approach isn't limited to the national geographical limits but can also find a new impulse in international comparison and networking. Concerning the international networking of regions, one of the most significant cases is the Norwegian one, in which, starting already from the Programme *Enterprise Development 2000 (ED200)* and giving a continuity with the Programme *Value Creation 2010 (VC2010)*, the adoption of an international benchmarking approach has always been one of the priorities. The VC2010 Programme promotes international cooperation among researchers, enterprise networks and coalitions and regional partnerships. International networking of regions has also been an objective of the Polish research programmes. Since 1990 13 Euro-regions have been created along Polish borders on the basis of agreements signed by the local authorities of neighbouring countries. These Euro-regions aimed at strengthening the relationships between regions of diverse countries, developing their infrastructure, furthering economic cooperation, promoting environmental policies, tourism and cultural and education activities. Nowadays in Poland, there are three trans-border regional areas:

- Pomeranian Euroregion (Poland, Germany and Sweden)
- The Neisse Euroregion (Poland, Czech republic, and Germany)
- The Carpathian Euroregion (Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Slovakia, and Rumania)

² The five national programmes are:

- The InnoRegio-competition
- New regional growth cores
- Interregional alliances for markets of tomorrow
- Inno Profiles
- Center of innovation competence

Global competition is a common aspect which all the regional development strategies are facing. But, there are two different ways to do it. The first one consists in promoting “specific national technology centres of excellence for setting the pace of global competition e.g. in biotechnology with only marginal regional effects”. The second one consists of promoting “overall regional development in less favoured regions that have been slow to catch up and meet the demands of increasing global competition”. The „Entrepreneurial Regions“ process supports both development strategies. On one side, it fosters the creation of national growth centres (*New regional growth centres*) “targeted to induce wide-spread regional effects and competitive strengths in global markets”. On the other side, “there was strongly felt the need to build up interregional exchange mechanisms and interregional alliances to cope successfully with the pressures of rising competition on the enlarged European markets” (*the Interregional Alliances for Markets of Tomorrow*). Behind the development of interregional cooperation there is a global purpose: creating cooperation networks as an instrument to open up the development of innovation potentials of the New Federal States, to accelerate their translation into trend-setting and market relevant products, methods and services and thus allow them to be competitive in a global market.

2.2 Relationships between regional and national level

After having explained the different concepts that can be associated with the adjective “regional”, it is important now to verify the type of relationship, if any, that exists between regional and national research programmes. In all the countries of the WORK-IN-NET partners, the analysis focused on both the national and regional level, with the exception of the Italian case. For Italy, only the regional level has been taken into consideration because of the substantial lack, at the national level, of research programmes on work oriented innovation and more specifically on work organisation. As the national channels supporting research and development were suspended at the beginning of 2002, the regional Programme for industrial research and Technology Transfer (PRITT) has replaced national research policy and has to be considered a regional reaction to the national policy change. Before 2002, the Emilia-Romagna region received from the national government 150 million euros destined for Industrial Research and Pre-competitive Development research. At the national level anyway, there was not a programme or a project that had the explicit objective of analysing work organisation. On the contrary, the regional level (within PRITT), the Ministry for Productive Activities decided to include work organisation and organisational innovation subjects amongst the relevant topics on which to focus the research programme. It is clear that there is a break between the research programme of the Emilia-Romagna government and the national government.

Differently from the Italian case, there are other regional programmes implemented at the regional level that have connection points with the national level. Certainly

the Swedish reality represents an example of interrelation of the two levels. During the period 2000-2003 all the counties (the administrative “regional” dimension) developed indeed broad agreements on economic growth that were then turned into regional growth programmes. The head of all these regional programmes is the Swedish government (at the national level) that assigned to the county administrative boards the task of initiating community committees for regional cooperation. Nowadays the committees are in charge of managing the regional growth programmes. The Swedish case shows a linkage between regional and national level where the element of connection is the delegation of power from the national to the regional level. The same relationship can be found in Poland. All the regional development policies are regulated by a formal contract between the Polish Government, represented by the Minister for Regional Development, and the Provincial self-government. The contract also provides transfers of resources to meet the objectives of the development strategy.

The connection points, in the cases analysed, can also be traced to the presence of regional or national representatives in development planning bodies. In Norway most of the research programmes are national but in some of them, for example the *VC2010*, the main projects could be regarded as “regional sub-programmes under the national programme” . In *VC2010* each of the 11 main projects has a steering committee that consists of a partnership for regional development and most of the main project. Also in Finland the majority of programmes are national, but they usually include a regional dimension “so that the measures are targeted to regions”. The Tykes Programme (FWDP) has contact persons in all the Economic Development Centres “to get more in touch with the work organisation in the region”. In Germany, the PT-DLR, the Project Management Organisation at the German Aerospace Centre, is in charge of the research activities relating to the Interregional Alliances within the „Entrepreneurial Regions“ -process. That means that PT-DLR as a national centre has to coordinate a national programme aimed at strengthening the relationships among diverse regions. The PT-DLR also plays a role in a regional work-place development programme since it has supported, through staff exchange, the implementation of the regional Work and Technology Programme in the Federal State of Bremen from 1991-1994 and is still represented in the competent advisory group. Likewise, the main stakeholders (employers, Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Craft and the Trade Unions) take part in the board of the Work Oriented Modernisation programme of G.I.B in representation of their interests at the regional level in addition to acting “in close contact with their national organisations”.

The linkage between regional and national programmes can also be expressed by the funding mechanism. All the projects within the Ministry of Labour in Emilia-Romagna, regarding gender policies and education, are mostly financed with national or European contributions. The Work Oriented Modernisation programme of the GIB is mainly financed by the European Social Fund whose regional management is also discussed at the national level by the regional “programme body”. In Sweden as well, the regional European Social Fund projects “are usually decided



by regional ESF-boards and not by the central level. Furthermore, the main projects in the Norwegian VC2010 programme are partly financed by the contributions of the county authorities.

In Poland the research activities on work oriented innovation are mainly funded by two national Ministries:

- The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour whose the main instruments promoting research activities are, as we have already seen, the Regional Development Strategies, implemented at the regional level (voivodships), the National SME Service Network (KSU) and the National Innovation Centres (KSI), coordinated by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development
- The Minister of Science and Information Society Technologies whose the main instruments in the area of national and regional pro-innovative programmes are the regional Innovation Strategies, implemented at the regional level, and Goal Oriented for Small and Medium Enterprises Programme, coordinated by the Polish Federation of Engineering Associations (FSNT-NOT)³

While Regional Development, as we have already highlighted, is “restricted to the regional administrative bodies”, the others are national programmes with central coordination but carried out by the local and branch offices spread throughout the national territory.

2.3 Questions that emerged in the final discussion

During the second day of the Bologna workshop, the participants were asked to open up a discussion on the structure and development of the regional research programmes. Concerning the topic of the definition of “regional dimension” mentioned previously, the participants explored whether the demographic dimension is an effective criteria for defining a regional area. In general there was a convergence of points of view. The number of inhabitants is an element that has to be taken into consideration when defining the regional area of intervention but it shouldn’t be the only criteria. The structural and industrial dimensions play a priority role.

Of evident importance is the ongoing process towards a decentralisation of the management of the research programmes. During the discussion the members of WORK-IN-NET programme highlighted how in their countries (in Finland as well as in Poland) they witness a development strategy more at the local level than at the regional level.

³ The Polish Federation of Engineering Associations (FSNT-NOT) is a non-profit organization and non-governmental organization with nearly 160 years history first Polish Engineering Federation.

Another aspect that was touched on over the course of the discussion was how to combine activities at various levels: regional, national and the European level. Whereas in Finland the European Social Fund is not utilised to finance research activities, the Finnish Work Environment Fund, however, was asked by the Ministry of Labour to cooperate with the European Programmes. As the Finnish Work Environment Fund representative stressed, the targets and the functioning of the diverse Funds are often incompatible. But, during the discussion, the participants pointed out the effective role of European programmes in preparing the ground for improved development partnerships. For example, in Germany the European Union funded initiatives, like ADAPT and EQUAL, contributed to create a favourable background for regional workplace development activities, especially in the federal states of Bremen and North-Rhine-Westfalia.

3 Strategic Objectives

The regional research programmes in Germany mentioned are part of a high road strategy for competitiveness, that try to improve employees' and firms' abilities to compete through work-oriented modernisation.

Accordingly in North-Rhine-Westfalia for at least twenty years, one of the main focuses of regional policy has been on quality of work, first under the name SoTech (Socially Acceptable Configuration of Technical and Work Organisation, and then QUATRO (Qualification-Work-Techniques-Reorganisation) and now "Work-Oriented Modernisation." All three of the programmes focus on work-related issues, in particular on strengthening employees' skills qualifications, improving workplaces and setting up modern, flexible forms of work organization in SMEs.

Regional policy in North-Rhine Westphalia is quite ambitious, with a number of different strategic objectives, ranging from the dissemination of research results to working to effect change at the firm level. The main agency involved in regional industrial policy is GIB, a development agency based in North-Rhine-Westphalia. Because of the size of the "Land," GIB works at the sub-regional level, to bring specific local needs into larger policy discussions.

In general, GIB works to create the right framework for change and to increase the individual firm's capacity to develop itself. The specific areas of intervention are: modernization of work organization, the improvement of employability, workplace health and safety, life-long learning, and making SMEs more attractive for young people. GIB's activities include the dissemination of research results, supporting innovation and quality improvements of products and services through effective leadership, reinforcing the role of the sub-regional agencies, bringing sub-regional needs into regional politics, and the support of local policy strategies and change in SMEs.



Following a multi-stakeholder approach, including government, business and labour, the “Working Group for Medium-Sized Enterprises in Change Processes” was set up as a joint federal state, industry and union initiative. The working group is the expression of an SME “offensive” designed to create a positive framework for the growth of SMEs, increase service offerings for SMEs, develop flexible business structures that allow firms to be more responsive to changing market conditions, and improve the quality of work.

Thus, the Bremen Work and Technology Programme attempts to improve competitiveness of companies and the employability of workers through the development of technical tools, new technologies, innovation in work organization, competence development and improved health and safety at workplaces. The Bremen Programme takes a holistic approach to innovation in work organization and technology by networking SMEs, research institutes, consultancies, vocational training institutions, departments of health and safety and the chambers of commerce.

With the main objective of regional restructuring in the new eastern federal states, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in Germany is promoting a series of networking initiatives, under the BMBF umbrella initiative „Entrepreneurial Regions“ framework, that together are called “Enterprise Region.” Enterprise Region has a budget of €90 million for 2005, and focuses on strengthening competitiveness and innovative capacity through networking. The programme, which ends in 2007, has a total budget of €500 million, to be spent over 8 years. Enterprise Region can be broken down into five main components: „Entrepreneurial Regions“ -competition, Innovative Regional Growth Cores, Interregional Alliances for Markets of Tomorrow, Inno Profiles and Centers of Innovation Competence. In general, the German state invests much more heavily in technology development than on innovation in work organization.

With the Enterprise Region programme, BMBF aims to set up “cooperation networks” among firms, research institutes, universities and policy makers for technology development. These networks are geared toward opening up and furthering development of the innovation potential of the economies of the New Federal States, helping them “catch up” with the western states and become leaders and trend-setters in technology.

Regional policy in Sweden focuses on growth, sustainable development and the creation of jobs. Policymakers see networking as an important tool for the development of competencies, as well as effective anti-discrimination efforts and productivity improvements. Reaching the goal of creating a sustainable growth model depends on the capacity of the regional productive systems to become more competitive at the international scale through innovation.

In this context, VINNOVA, the Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems, plays an important role. VINNOVA has identified 18 priority growth areas in six different industries, from IT and communications technology, to manufacturing to biotechnology. Through the creation of “internationally competitive innovation environ-

ments” based on the “Triple Helix” model of participation among the scientific community, policymakers and business, VINNOVA intends to support firms in those 18 growth areas to improve their returns on R&D, their competitiveness at the international level and, therefore, achieve sustainability.

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Innovation, work organization, quality of work, workplace health and safety and competitiveness are covered by three different ministries in Emilia-Romagna: the Ministries of Labour, Productive Activities, and Health.

The Ministry of Labour of Emilia-Romagna pursues a broad set of objectives related to work: equal opportunity and gender equality, employability, adaptability of people and organizations, the reconciliation of work and social life, career opportunities for women, and female entrepreneurship. At the Bologna Meeting, May 9 and 10, 2005, the contribution by the representative of the ministry focused mostly on the strategic objectives regarding women and the regional economy and professional and vocational training.

Though Emilia-Romagna is relatively advanced in terms of female participation in the workforce (already exceeding the European target for 2010 of 60%), policymakers are grappling with problems like creating real career paths for women, on-the-job training, balancing work and home life, a pay gap of 20%, an unemployment rate double the rate for men, and a much less stable employment situation. The Labour Ministry’s strategic objectives, regarding women and the workforce, are to provide effective training to women, “gender mainstreaming” and governance of the work/life balance through the creation of a model of an integrated local system involving government, unions, business and associations to provide services and render work organization more flexible so that women can more effectively participate. The integrated local systems will also address the pay gap problem and, through the “IQ DONNA” programme, create a trademark for enterprises that are woman- and family-friendly.

In Emilia-Romagna, professional and vocational training are financed with national and EU funds. In Emilia-Romagna, aside from those programmes managed by the national state (like the state technical high schools), vocational and professional training is carried out by private agencies and financed by the regional administration according to a multi-year, regional training plan which sets the broad objectives. Budgeting is approved on an annual basis.

The Ministry for Productive Activities of Emilia-Romagna, through its Regional Quality Plan and PRIITT (Regional Programme for Innovation and Technology Transfer) aims to impact work organization, firm-level organization and innovative



capacity. The Ministry makes funding available on an application basis for SMEs, research institutes and consultancies in Emilia-Romagna through both PRIITT and the Quality Plan.

The specific objectives of the Quality Plan are: improvements in company management, including quality management, in a socially valuable way, for example through organisational innovation, containment of environmental impact, improvement of workplace safety and the development of an entrepreneurial culture; the development of company networks for the improvement of productive capacity, the creation of joint service activities and network qualification; upgrading productive systems, the creation of evaluation methods and joint initiatives favouring increased exports and internationalization of the productive system.

PRIITT is divided into four measures and is aimed, generally, at strengthening the relationship between research and firms or networks of firms in the region. This represents a strategic shift for regional policy: no longer is the focus on providing “real services” to SMEs through the network of service centres, but on setting up, with seed money from the Region, a network of private laboratories, research institutes and other centres in collaboration with private firms (or groups of firms) and existing institutions like universities, laboratories or consultancies.

Of particular interest to WORK-IN-NET is PRIITT’s measure 4, which impacts work and work organization in a deep way. Under measure 4, the Region finances projects that: create high quality research and technology transfer labs that stimulate new employment through increased circulation of technical and scientific knowledge and linking advanced knowledge centres with those at the national and international level; develop a network of centres that monitor and stimulate the innovation needs of companies with the specific goal of increasing access for SMEs to knowledge and technical know-how, fostering innovation in product, production processes and firm organization; promote and strengthen the development of the region’s applied research network and technology transfer activities through local universities and research institutes.

Finally, there are the activities of the Ministry of Health of Emilia-Romagna, which also have a significant impact on work organisation and quality of work, in particular through policies aimed at improving workplace health and safety. Research financed by the Ministry of Health, mainly the annual workplace health and safety report written by the Institute for Labour, is all highly focused on addressing specific problems in workplace health and safety. Research is not abstract or theoretical, but is directly connected to interventions designed to make the region’s workplaces safer.

VC2010, or Value Creation 2010, is a national research programme with a regional articulation. The project carried out in the Hordoland and Rogoland regions represent an example of the regional articulation. It aims at encouraging and contributing to organisational development and change at the enterprise and company network level. It takes a multistakeholder approach that links local actors through the

creation of a development coalition that includes firms, local government, universities and labour unions.

Rather than focusing on encouraging the creation of new business (entrepreneurship) the “Development Coalition Hordoland and Rogoland” project works to expand opportunities in existing businesses (intrapreneurship), through broad participation of the social partners in processes of strategic business development and the creation of a work environment that fosters innovation and creativity.

Through action research, the regional project aims to create a “culture that accepts change” in partner firms, working with all the social partners to encourage continuous improvement and innovation, the creation of simple methods and tools to use in such projects, and to transfer those tools to all the firms in the development coalition.

As mentioned before, the strategic objectives for regional policy in Poland fall under four different projects/areas: Regional Development Strategies (RDS), The National SME Services Network (KSU), The Programme of Goal Oriented Projects for Small and Medium Size Enterprises (GOP), and the Programme of Network Innovation Centres of FSNT-NOT.

In response to what many experts have called the “crisis of Polish space,” due to the degradation of the natural environment, poor management structure of some regions, investment distortion in rural areas, and the lack of basic infrastructure and recreational areas, the national government partitioned the Polish state into self-governing provincial units in 1999. Following this partitioning, the Council of Ministers passed the National Strategy for Regional Development Act which determined the role of the local and regional levels of administration in economic development. This act represents a formal contract between the national government and the provincial units, complete with a transfer of resources to the regional level in order to meet the goals of: development of individual regions, the improvement of quality of life and living conditions for citizens by addressing the needs of the local community, the creation of the conditions for local communities to be competitive, and helping the more backwards regions catch up to the more highly developed regions.

Over the course of 8 years in operation the National SME Services Network has created nearly 180 “operating outlets” made up of regional and local development agencies, business support centres, chambers of industry and commerce and local non-profits. These outlets provide direct services to firms aimed at supporting innovation, training and financing of SMEs. This programme is funded nationally, with EU funds as well, but is highly decentralized.

The GOP programme, or Goal Oriented Projects for SMEs, is financed by the Ministry of Science and Information Society and carried out by the Polish Federation of Engineering Associations (FSNT-NOT). GOP’s objectives are to help existing firms increase R&D. Finally, the network of innovation centres managed by FSNT-



NOT aims at providing support to SMEs through the development of cooperative relations among firms and the research and development sectors.

In Finland, the national Ministries of Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Forestry and Labour have jointly set up 15 Employment and Economic Development Centres (T&E Centres). These Centres operate at the regional level and provide a range of services for businesses, entrepreneurs and private individuals including: supporting and advising SMEs throughout their life cycle, promoting technological development in enterprises and assisting in matters of exportation and internationalisation, implementation of regional labour policies, planning and organisation of professional training programmes for adults, providing support for the development of farming and rural business activity, developing fisheries and, in general, participating in setting regional development policies.

The T&E Centres, and other development initiatives in Finland, are financed to a large extent through EQUAL and Objective 3 funding. Finland's Objective 3 priorities include: exploitation of the demand for labour and promotion of employability, the promotion of equality and equal opportunities in working life, improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training, promoting worker-mobility and strengthening the link between education/training and working life, and the development of human capital as a support for entrepreneurship, quality of working life and the use of research and technology.

Programme orientation profile

Programme/Participant	Finland	Germany, PT-DLR	Germany, G.I.B.	Italy	Norway	Poland	Sweden
Labour market oriented			X	X			
Research oriented		X		X		X	X
Development oriented	X		X	X	X	X	X

3.1 Questions that Emerged in the Final Discussion

The different approaches to regional policy and research examined go from highly centralized, top-down models to highly decentralized models with virtually no national role. The Swedish model provides the best example of the top-down approach, where the national government decides the policy and then gives the counties the job of developing the specific projects.

There are also examples of a mixed approach, perhaps the most interesting of which is Poland which has pursued, over the last several years, a top-down approach to decentralization. Following the central government's repartitioning of the country into self-managing provincial units, the central cabinet charged these new units with development policy, complete with a transfer of resources and powers to act within a broad set of guidelines.

Emilia-Romagna provides a good example of a bottom up approach. The regional and provincial levels are the most important in terms of policy and research and their impact on development at the regional level. With the effective absence of the national government in policymaking in the fields of economic development, workforce training and health, the local and regional levels have a significant amount of freedom to experiment with policy.

In general, there seems to be a movement toward greater decentralization and to bottom-up approaches based on the involvement of local actors in decision making, with central authorities playing a less active role.

In a few cases significant attention was also paid to the sub-regional dimension, as is the case of GIB in North-Rhine Westphalia. Here, the Ministry for Economy and Labour in the Land plays a coordinating and advisory role, including providing official approval for projects, and the sub-regional agencies and corresponding steering committees are in charge of developing and selecting projects and, in general, implementing the programme on Work-Oriented Modernisation.

Competitiveness was a key component of all regional initiatives. Often there was an emphasis on "high road" strategies for competitiveness in an attempt to make business performance, quality of working life, and organisational innovation coincide. In practice, however, the risk to choose the low road based on cost is always present. This is something that Finland has experienced, for example. Attempts to tie financing to employment include Finland's mechanism whereby financing for a particular project is interrupted if employment is reduced.

4 Development partnership

Comparing the different regional research programmes or national programmes with regional implementation, it should be noted that there is a general tendency to



foster the creation of development partnerships at the local level in order to stimulate a favourable climate for work oriented innovation or in order to develop strategic partnerships of companies, research institutes and public agencies.

4.1 Development partnership in practice

The development partnerships often consist of stakeholders inside the regional borders mainly because, as the German „Entrepreneurial Regions“ process experience indicated, “the external stakeholders or promoters may be very useful in including processes of cooperation above all in building up interregional alliances. But in the long run, regional stakeholders have to come into or remain on the centre stage of lasting innovative partnership”. It is important to amalgamate and reinforce the relationships among the stakeholders acting in the same area to value and capitalize on the competitive advantages of that area and to favour endogenous development. In fact, in the context of developing regional activities from the bottom –up, the contribution of external stakeholders “plays only an intensifying role if there are already processes of linking regional actors around joint interests. But, they might be created top-down, by the pure financial effect of national programmes funding development partnerships”.

In Sweden, many R&D supporting organizations including VINNOVA and the Swedish Council for the European Social Funds require certain actors to participate in networks and partnerships. In the VINNOVA case, this behaviour is based on the focus on innovation systems analysis and on Triple Helix networks, with the aim of boosting cooperation among business, research and the public sector including the political level. Keeping the focus on the Swedish situation, it should be remarked how the national government charges the county administrative boards with the task of developing “community committees for regional cooperation”: the regional programmes aimed at adopting a systemic approach in which cooperation among the regional stakeholders represents the guarantee for lasting growth.

Since North-Rhine Westphalia, a State with more than 18 millions of inhabitants, is administratively divided in 16 sub-regions, the GIB avails itself of an organizational structure made up of 16 sub-regional agencies. The agencies on the sub-regional level “provide advice for applicants and organize the acceptance of the local stakeholder groups”. So they act as a formal filter for the identification of partners.

In Emilia-Romagna, the Ministry of Labour commits itself to developing a large partnership for local development above all else regarding reconciliation of work and social life and equal opportunity. The partnership consists of social partners, also at the local level, employment agencies and labour market agencies, municipalities and representatives of the third sector. The regional Ministry of Labour also intervenes wherever the presence of social partners is weak with a view of introducing the concept of representativeness and supporting the creation of institu-

tionalized representation. The Ministry for Productive Activities designed in the PRITT a specific measure to foster cooperation among research institutes, universities, consulting agencies, institutions and companies in order to develop positive synergies at the local and regional level. The same regional contribution depends on the applicants' capability of creating a stable partnership. Though the regional entrepreneurial associations have one of the highest membership rates among companies in Italy, there are still some sectors, especially those belonging to the so-called new economy, underrepresented by the organizations of the social partners. The Ministry for Productive Activities avails itself of private consulting companies to gain access in those cases. The consulting company acts as connector not because of being forced by the public authorities but in reaction to spontaneous market dynamics.

In Norway the creation and development of the regional coalition between the social partners and public authorities is one of the main actions within the programme *VC2010*. In fact the principal stakeholders in the main 11 projects of *VC2010* are the regional authorities, that is the county administration, the regional organization of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry and the regional organization of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, together with the regional office of Innovation Norway. Going into detail, the main regional project of Hordaland and Rogoland on the South-West coast of Norway, under the *VC2010* programme, aims explicitly at creating a development coalition in which the trade unions, employer associations and the public bodies, together with other labour-oriented organizations, interact in order to create a climate favourable to work-oriented innovation based on creativity and participation. According to the main project planning, the collaboration has to take place on the basis of the triple helix model at different levels to capture multiple reciprocal relationships at the different points of the process of knowledge capitalization. The climate of cooperation achieved among all the partners involved in the main project was the result of a ten-year process of trust building to achieve a good level of exchange of information, intense regional tripartite collaboration, and the use of simple methods and tools for the development projects based on broad participation, cooperation between the social partners and with a focus on Health, Environment, Safety (HES) and IT.

4.2 The role of tripartitism

When analyzing research programmes on work oriented innovations, it is necessary to draw attention to which role the social partners play and which relationship exists between the social partners and the public authorities in the planning and implementation of the research programmes. In other words, we would like to verify in the following pages how important the tripartite approach is in the research programmes. In all the partners' countries analyzed in the WORK-IN-NET programme the social partners are involved in at least one phase of the research pro-

grammes, with the exception of Poland where the social partners aren't involved in defining the objectives of the programme or in their implementation.

In the Emilia-Romagna Region, all the programmes on work oriented innovation of the regional Ministries (Ministry of Labour, Ministry for Productive Activities and Ministry of Health), involved in the analysis, charge the social partners with a consultation task in goal setting. According to the regional statute and in line with the regional approach, all the social partners are asked to participate in the "Conference for Economy and Labour" in order to be consulted about the contents of the Three-year Programme of the Ministry for Productive Activities⁴. The Conference doesn't have decision making power. It is only a consultation body with a consensus building function. With specific reference to the Three-year Programme, for example, all the social partners agree on the idea of introducing the concept of work organization among the focal topics of the research programme, despite the diversity of perspectives. The regional association of large companies expressed the intention of investing more in management style, SMEs were more interested in the development of networks and cooperation among enterprises, while trade unions preferred the idea of changes in work organization focusing on the workplace.

In Germany, at the regional level of workplace development programmes the tripartite approach has still a big impact but, as it emerged in the course of the two-day workshops, the social partners' intervention is often inconsistent and non-homogeneous throughout the regional territory. Similar to Germany, in Finland tripartitism is still strong but the actors involved are often not skilled enough to start up a constructive cooperation. The Finnish critics referred to their firm belief that the social partners regard tripartitism often as an aim and not as a method. If the main actors of the tripartitism don't have the right skills and tools to benefit from it, the tripartitism assumes a fuzzy dimension. In the Bremen workplace development programme employer organizations and trade unions are part of the "advisory group for the programme implementation as well as in specific workshops organized by the programme management to identify problem areas and in participative procedures on the project level including the written consent of the works council". As we have already mentioned above, also in the regional programme on Work Oriented Modernisation of G.I.B. the social partners actively participate in the programme board bringing their point of view into the definition of the goals. But in the latest period the social partners showed scarce interest for a cooperative approach to programme goal setting. In fact the representative of the social partners' organizations didn't take part in the last meeting of the regional programme board.

⁴ The Conference for Economy and Labour was started in 1993 with the approval of the regional cabinet, after an in depth debate of the regional council. The conference constitutes the forum for consultation among business and trade union representatives and allows their participation in the definition of the programmatic choices and regional social and economic policy.

4.2.1 The crisis of tripartitism in Sweden

The analysis of the questionnaires filled out before the Bologna workshop points out how traditional Swedish tripartitism at the national level is going through a crisis. In fact “the social partners in Sweden are working closely together at the regional level but not at the national one compared to a decade or two ago.” Why has the relationships between social partners gotten worse over the last twenty years? Whose fault is it? Obviously many factors contributed to the interruption of the tripartitism as a planning method at the national level. In the past, the employer associations and trade unions actively participated in the boards of all the national labour based agencies. All the decisions were the results of a sharing process. Nowadays the social partners have lost their decision making power and only retain a consultative role. The reasons have to be sought in three elements. First of all, a global background characterized by neoliberal hegemony breaks all the social equilibriums formerly achieved. Secondly, the employer association abandoned its seats on the boards of the national labour-based agencies, rejecting every kind of sharing attempt and preferring a unilateral decision-making mechanism. In other words, the employer association assumed a neoliberal position more inclined to reducing taxes than to investing in a cooperative process. The third aspect is represented by the weakening of the trade union. Though in Sweden the union maintains one of the highest unionization rates and largest extension of collective bargaining in Europe, in the last year the trade union got weaker due also to the increase of unemployment and an absenteeism rate up to 20% of the labour force.

With regard to the first aspect of the Swedish tripartitism crisis, the Bologna workshop shows how the neoliberal push ran also into Germany and Italy. In the first case the employer association explicitly attacks the codetermination principles and bargains at the company-level “exit clauses” with the effect of weakened national collective bargaining processes. In Italy the ongoing flexibilisation of the labour market promoted by the centre-right government makes the collective bargaining less and less effective. The labour market reform, the so-called Biagi Law, introduced more forms of flexibility increasing the precariousness not only among young employees but among employees over 45 years of age as well, an effect the social system was unprepared to cope with, and hindering the “concertation” process, that is a process of continuous interaction between the social partners and government with the aim of reaching agreements on the control of certain economic and social variables, both at the macro and micro level.

4.3 Networking

The development partnership finds an added value in networking. The promotion of positive synergies contributes to effectively turning programmes into practice. Herein after we will provide some examples on how the different programmes deal with networking. In North-Rhine Westphalia, among the three types of projects



carried out, especially the “joint project” was created to encourage networking among companies and workplaces. GIB promotes this project with the use of several channels of communication among which the dissemination of best practices represent the most effective one. Since 2000, 373 “joint projects” have been carried out involving 2364 companies and 108,721 employees. The original projects focused on three subjects: strategic networks among craft companies, cooperation of media companies and cooperation of companies along value chains. The programmes, that are managed in collaboration with PT-DLR at the national level, promote networking approaches by various mechanisms of programme implementation and project management. Thus, the programme Interregional Alliances for the Markets of Tomorrow within the „Entrepreneurial Regions“ Process is a clear example of stimulating networks to push regional development.

Similar to Germany, networking also plays a priority role in the implementation phase of the programmes in the Scandinavian countries. In Norway the main projects within *VC2010* organize learning networks that include public administrations, labour and business. In Sweden networking doesn't only involve actors within the traditional scope of industrial relations (companies and workers) but also includes associations promoting equal opportunities, organizations of the handicapped and ethnic organizations. In this case networking extends beyond the firm's borders and enters into relationship with civil society.

In the Emilia-Romagna region, as well as in Poland, in North-Rhine Westphalia and in Bremen, the partnership is often made up of networks of small and medium enterprises, due to the composition of the industrial background the programmes refer to. In Emilia-Romagna, for example, a large percentage (more than 99%) of the firms are SMEs. In all cases, the programmes mainly focus on supporting the creation of technology transfer laboratories and networks of centres capable of stimulating the circulation of scientific knowledge and technology information. It should be highlighted that, in the Bremen Work and Technology programme, the criteria of partner identification include also that small and medium companies are allowed to be partners only if they are completely independent from large companies set outside the Federal State. As it was specified in the course of the Bologna Workshop especially by the Italian and German WORK-IN-NET partners, the experience shows that SMEs have often to be brought to apply for funds. While in the four countries mentioned the research programmes are primarily directed to SMEs, in Sweden all sectors and dimensions are covered. The private sector and especially larger companies are overrepresented.

4.4 Sub-regional needs

In some of the regional programmes analyzed, there are mechanisms for allowing sub-regional needs to have a voice in goal setting. In this regard, the Emilia-Romagna region organizes different consultation spaces in which the provincial

(the sub-regional level) representatives can take part. In the area of the Ministry of Labour, the sub regional needs are represented through the Institutional Coordination Centre (at the provincial level), the equal opportunity advisor networks, the equal opportunity commissions at the local level that are directly coordinated by the regional Ministry of Labour and the “Forum of experts on equal opportunities” at the local level⁵. In line with the participative orientation of the Emilia-Romagna region, the Ministry for Productive Activities involves the provincial level in the consultation phase. But the provincial representatives indeed don’t bring their specific problems into the consultation phase; instead they contribute to defining regional targets and instruments. The province, as well as the local authorities, are actors entitled to apply for the funding so they directly express their point of view. Then, as all the projects within objective 2 of the European Social Fund deal with the development of depressed areas, the sub-regional level exerts a bigger influence on all those projects. With regard to the Ministry of Health, the connection with the sub-regional level is guaranteed by the presence of provincial trade union confederations in the goal setting processes for the general regional strategy.

The Emilia-Romagna region is not the only administrative structure attentive to sub-regional needs. In the Work Oriented Modernization programme of the G.I.B, the sub-regional voice is taken into consideration by means of 16 sub-regional agencies that are in charge of bringing the local needs into the discussion of the regional politics and to turn the regional policies into the specific sub-regional practice. The national German programme Interregional Alliances for the Markets of Tomorrow promotes innovation fora or development arenas in order to identify regional needs and allow the sub-regional level to exert an influence on the setting-up and developing of joint objectives and contents on innovation partnerships, both at the regional and interregional level. But, in general it is difficult for regional programme activities to guarantee an adequate representation of sub-regional needs and democratic participation of all important interests in the implementation process and the management of programmes. In Sweden as well, there is not a constant attendance of the sub-regional representatives in the regional committees.

In Poland the sub-regional dimension is guaranteed by the civil law agreements between the Polish government and the provincial self-government. The contract regulates the regional development oriented cooperation between the central and decentralized level.

4.5 Questions that emerged in the course of the discussion

In the course of the discussion, the participants dealt with different topics regarding the research programmes on work oriented innovation and how they should be im-

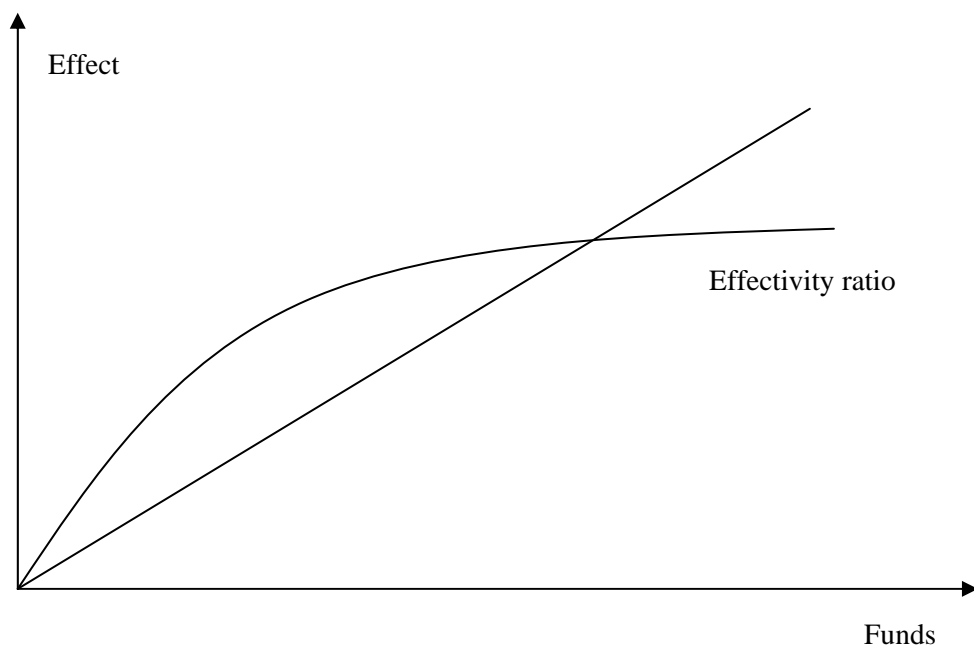
⁵ All the bodies that have been mentioned aimed at promoting and disseminating equal opportunity oriented actions, at the regional and local level.

plemented. The first topic concerned the role of consultants and researchers. The majority of the members of the project agreed upon the idea of a flexible methodology: sometimes it is better to act as a researcher, other times as facilitator and sometimes as a consultant. It is important to avoid a rigid methodology and to adopt methodology to the different needs. This idea of flexibility can be traced back to the concept that is behind the action research approach: researching the dynamics of change by involving the actors who play a role in that change and then to provide advice on the basis of the results of the research activities. According to this point of view, the research programme needs dynamic and people capable of reading the specific problems and to find out adequate solutions through a shared approach.

Among participants, there was a discussion on the respective roles of researchers and consultants in the framework of regional development coalitions. While in the case of the NRW programme “Work-Oriented Modernisation” consultants assume a crucial role the other programmes make primarily use of research in order to achieve the desired results. In an innovative development project in Bremen, there was the research process accompanied by clusters of consultants in order to effectively disseminate and multiply the results from the very beginning. In any case, the participants highlighted the relevance of training for consultants in order to guarantee the success of regional research and development projects. The training activities should be addressed also to all the members of the networks to render them capable of autonomous and endogenous development.

A particular problem is arising in Sweden. Swedish researchers are facing a unique threat as a result of restructuring and downsizing of the military. As military bases close down, the government is responding by moving state agencies to those areas to try to limit the impact of job losses due to base closings. While this is certainly welcomed by areas that will be suffering job losses, it is having a negative effect on the Stockholm area. On the one hand, the families who are now being uprooted are upset, on the other hand there is the risk of competency losses as a result of these moves. Agencies will likely take a few years to recoup those losses, which, besides the negative impact on performance, will cost taxpayers as well.

The other subject dealt with by the participants concerned the relationship between the efficacy of a programme and the funds available. The former experiences show that the funds are not the only variable affecting the quality of the results and beyond a certain “optimum point”, the positive effect of funding may decrease. Another opinion considers the “optimum” not as a peak but as long flat line. The different opinions of the participants can be summarized by a graphic proposed during the two-day workshop.



Another question the participants focused on was what should have been done when the funding is over. In order to achieve a lasting effect, some partner suggested to monitor the development of the programme also over a longer period, e.g. as happens in the national programme Interregional Alliances for the Markets of Tomorrow within the „Entrepreneurial Regions“ Process. The representative of the Rogaland Research Institute stressed the importance of guaranteeing continuity between the end of a programme and the beginning of the next one, or at least reducing the evaluation time running from one to the other one. Otherwise, the network is likely to break up and lose the researchers.

5 Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation

The following pages will be focused on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation systems developed in the different cases analysed.

PT-DLR first presents its research programmes at the sub-regional level through announcements and a series of presentations to the general public. More so than the official announcements, the meetings with the public are the most important means of creating awareness about these programmes. Experts, representatives of the social partners, business associations and other interested parties are invited to these presentations. Another method that proved very successful was the use of “problem-identifying workshops” involving representatives from specific areas that pro-



grammes were aimed at, like logistics and suppliers in the case of the Bremen Work and Technology Programme.

In Germany, there are several monitoring phases designed to gauge the success of a particular programme, including internal and external evaluations, both ex-ante and ex-post, as required whenever public funds are used. What has been found to be most effective, however, are interactive evaluation methods early at the beginning of the project, and then again at mid-term. While the ex-post evaluation allows researchers to gain valuable feed-back, early and mid-term participatory evaluations allow feed-forward, or corrections during the course of the project to assure optimum performance.

In North-Rhine Westphalia different advisory committees are set up at the sub-regional level with the task of identifying the most important clusters and to develop effective support strategies at the local and sub-regional level. Committee members are selected from among the different stakeholder groups associated with the particular project. Specifically, the sub-regional work committees make decisions regarding strategic goals for the sub-region or industry cluster involved in a research project as well as the approval of pre-operating or joint projects. The sub-regional agencies (one for each committee) are funded directly by the ministry and provide support to the work of the sub-regional committees.

Results are monitored on both the programme level and the specific project level. On the programme level, outcomes are monitored through quarterly and annual reports, in addition to extra reports on special questions. Comparative evaluations are also done at the programme level to gauge the effective impact of a particular intervention. For example, employment levels before and after the intervention are examined in the context of the Work Oriented Modernisation projects. The performance of the firms involved in projects is also compared to that of the SMEs on average. On a project level, every participating company (and their employees in the case of joint projects) fills out a questionnaire, qualitative interviews are conducted with the firms, as well as an analysis of pre-operating studies. Additionally, statements by firm representatives regarding competitiveness and by employees regarding quality of work are collected.

In Sweden, the system of approval for projects is rather centralized. VINNOVA, after consulting with the Triple Helix boards, decides centrally which projects to finance. In terms of monitoring, Vinnova has moved away from the "linear model" of implementation and monitoring, in favour of a system based on dissemination of information through continuous seminars and meetings. This allows for constant feedback, which has taken on greater importance recently. In addition to the continuous interaction, final reports from projects and programmes are evaluated. VINNOVA requires all programmes that it supports to organize for follow-up as well as external evaluations. Each project is usually required to have a follow-up system planned as well.

In Emilia-Romagna, after the yearly budget available for the Ministry of Productive Activities has been decided upon, the region publicizes the call for tenders through a series of informational meetings. Firms or other organisations that want to benefit from regional funding for specific projects fill out a detailed, 20 page application. Each project application is then evaluated by an independent evaluator (the Emilia-Romagna database contains about 1400 evaluators). Once each project has been assessed, a committee of experts that work for the Ministry (essentially a Steering Committee) evaluate the projects on the basis of the results from the independent assessment and then choose projects on the basis of the independent evaluation and the economic impact of the proposed project. Every beneficiary is required to publish the results of his or her project.

In addition, ASTER, the regional technology transfer and research agency, and the committee of experts monitor the projects underway to assure adherence to the regional objectives, as well as carrying out an ex-post evaluation.

Within the VC2010 programme, each regional project has its own steering committee where stakeholders from the regional partnership are represented. Funding for regional projects is composed of grants from the Research Council, regional authorities and participating enterprises. The steering committee decides which research activities in each project are to be carried out.

6 Challenges

Certainly a common challenge is that of funding, in particular, the need to combine different funding sources and to render the participants independent in order to make sure that the particular intervention has a lasting effect, and does not end when the public funding ends. To this end, for example in Germany, a key component of a project with artisan firms was professional training to increase the capacity and level of independence of the owner.

Another funding challenge regarded continuity. In other words, it is important that too much time does not pass between the end of one project and the beginning of another, especially in the beginning phases of a project. If there is an interruption, the risk is of the particular network breaking up, as in the case when a ministry or other agency that is funding a particular project will suspend funding during a period of evaluation of the efficacy of the project. While this is important, it is important that this does not harm the long-term potential for the success of a project.

Globalization is another challenge that each partner is dealing with. For German research policy part of the key to dealing with global competition is, on the one hand, the promotion of national technological centres of excellence, and on the other hand, especially with respect to the new federal states in East Germany, creating new regional and interregional alliances and exchange mechanisms.



Research programmes have also experienced problems with subsidiarity and issues of complementarity and synergy between research activities at the regional and national level. This problem is particularly acute in Emilia-Romagna given the significant gap between the national and regional level. In essence, there is no complementarity to speak of, most of the burden for funding as well as managing research activities falls to the regional and provincial level.

7 Resources and Funding

The projects under the Bremen Programme on Work and Technology are funded by the Ministry of Labour from the Federal State of Bremen, the European Social Fund and the European Fund for Regional Development. ADAPT also provided funding in the past. There are efforts in realising explicit strategies for developing sustainable structures to ensure continued success of the project once funding is terminated.

The main funding for projects in North-Rhine Westphalia is provided by the European Social Fund. In addition, there are more than 100 sub-regional agencies that provide access to funding. Three types of projects are funded. Pre-operating studies, those studies whose main objective is the development of methods and tools and knowledge transfer, are financed largely by public monies, with the private sector providing only 20% of financing. In 2004 23 pre-operating studies were funded for a total of €4,067,436. Joint projects, which focus on developing new methods and tools in selected companies, are financed by the public money for up to 50% of the total cost. In 2004, 48 joint projects were financed for a total of €2,109,386. The third category of project is called "Potenzialberatung," essentially consulting services for developing capacity in SMEs. These are joint projects between consulting firms and SMEs, and are 50% financed by public monies. In 2004 1,363 Potenzialberatung projects were financed for a total of €6,004,728.

In terms of European funding the research programmes in Sweden are also financed by EQUAL and the European Social Fund.

Projects in Emilia-Romagna are financed by a combination of funds from the European Social Fund and the Regional Administration (including funds transferred from the national government to the regional administration). Generally 50% of the total cost of a project is financed, creating an element of risk for the beneficiary. From 2000 until 2006 the Ministry for Productive Activities of Emilia-Romagna will have obtained a total of €240,000,000 from the objective 2 of the European Social Fund (in detail for the Province of Ferrara and Ravenna and for the mountain areas). The Ministry of Labour receives 400 millions of Euro to finance all the regional training policies, of which 3-5% are destined to research activities.

Level of Programme Funding

Programme/Participant	Finland	Germany, PT-DLR	Germany, G.I.B.	Italy	Norway	Poland	Sweden
European funded regional programme						X	
National regional programme	X	X			X	X	X
Regional regional programme			X	X			

8 Lisbon Strategy: Competitiveness, Quality and Social Cohesion

The majority of WORK-IN-NET participants responded in the affirmative to the question: “are research programmes in line with the Lisbon strategy?”

Programmes in North-Rhine Westphalia are based on making firms quality, not price leaders. This means focusing on producing the best quality goods and services in order to maintain high-wage employment. This is one of the aims of the Work Oriented Modernisation programme.

In Emilia-Romagna, research and policy programmes are in line with the Lisbon strategy in a number of ways. The high level of involvement of the social partners in policy implementation promotes and strengthens social cohesion and positive industrial relations. Policy is always focused on a “high road” approach to competitiveness based on seeing human resources as a resource and investment, and not simply a cost to be lowered. The programmes of the Health Ministry as well are in line with the Lisbon strategy through the promotion of increased quality of work and safety in the face of changes and emerging risks.

As mentioned before, there is frequently a conflict between the social aspects of the firm and competitiveness, this is particularly true when management chooses the “low road” to competitiveness based on reducing labour costs. Some programmes seek to marry the two, that is competitiveness and social cohesion, while in others one wins out over the other.



GIB, in North-Rhine Westphalia, for example focuses on making firms competitive in ways that improve the conditions of the workforce and long-term employability. This is most evident in the Work-Oriented Modernisation programme. The programme itself is the result of a joint initiative among labour, business and government and seeks to make SMEs more competitive through innovation in work organisation and workforce training to both help meet firms' needs for qualified labour, and make workers' more employable in the long-term. There is also evidence of a positive impact of projects on employment levels.

Although the Swedish agency VINNOVA focuses on competitiveness, social cohesion and sustainable development the most important objective is competitiveness. The programmes that are focused on work-oriented innovation are guided by the Triple Helix committees, made up of business, the research community and government, not including workers or their representatives. In addition, at the national level, there seems to have been a breakdown in cooperation among the social partners, though not at the regional level.

In Emilia-Romagna, there is a strong interdependence between competitiveness and social cohesion. In fact, the Ministry of Productive Activities has made financing projects that seek competitiveness through innovations in work organisation an important part of its programme. Underlying all of the projects promoted by the Ministry of Labour is the goal of creating "a positive equilibrium among social development, economic development and quality of work, in other words, sustainable development." The same is true of the programmes supported by the Ministry of Health: by promoting healthier, safer workplaces the region promotes competitiveness based on quality working conditions.

A final example of the effective promotion of both social cohesion and business competitiveness comes from the VC2010 project, "the Hordaland and Rogaland Development Coalition." This project seems to have amply achieved both goals, in fact, they seem to have created a mutually reinforcing circle, with competitiveness and social cohesion contributing to one another.

9 Topics for future discussion

On the basis of the outcomes of the workshop on RRP's and the questionnaires filled out by the project partners we will try to identify the topics that need to be discussed more in depth in order to be able to shape future bilateral and multilateral activities of the regional working group.

The exchange of information on regional research programmes and in particular on experiences with broad development coalitions for implementing sustainable regional innovation systems with job creating effects has shown that there are some relevant differences with regard to the various experiences with RRP's. These dif-

ferences regard processes and structures of RRP, on the one hand, and methodological aspects as well as contents and strategic approaches, on the other hand.

Further discussion seems to be necessary with regard to the relationship between the different levels of research programmes. It is of particular interest to identify the concrete possibilities for an improved co-ordination between national and regional level as well as between regional and sub-regional level. In this context the advantages and disadvantages of top-down and bottom-up approaches will have to be discussed more in depth.

Another aspect to be discussed further regards the strategic objectives of RRP. Although the regional programmes are supposed to be part of a *high road* strategy for competitiveness there seem to be differences in the main foci. Economic growth, job creation and sustainable development are the main strategic objectives in nearly all programmes, but the emphasis is put in different ways. Furthermore, the discussion during the workshop showed that there might be the need to define more concretely evaluation criteria regarding the impact on employment levels as well as on living and working conditions. In this context it should also be discussed whether research programmes should be linked to (regional) social quality standards expressing a high road approach to innovation and competition. With regard to future transregional activities it might be useful to find commonly agreed (minimum) criteria of a high road approach to competition and innovation as well as a certain number of commonly shared objectives.

The different composition of regional development coalitions in different societal environments seems to be another topic to be addressed in future. The workshop showed for example that there are specific challenges for development partnerships in regions characterised by a strong presence of small and medium-sized enterprises. Of particular importance in this context is the question whether the pressure deriving from global competition on participatory experiences will have an impact on the role of tripartism. At company level the involvement of employees and works councils seems to be particularly relevant, but not in all cases guaranteed. A further discussion on how to learn from positive experiences will be necessary. Another question regards the role of researchers and consultants. What should be their respective roles in the framework of regional development coalitions?

Furthermore, in future it will be still necessary to focus on R&D strategies at regional level including critical factors and missing links for a successful dissemination and application of results.

10 Future activities

After the Bologna workshop the representatives of the Institute for Labour, together with the coordinators of the WORK-IN-NET group, discussed possible future activities of the working group on RRP. On the basis of the results of the Bo-



logna workshop the Institute for Labour will identify, in collaboration with the coordinators of the WORK-IN-NET group, some crucial themes which might be of interest for all the partners of the working group on RRP. All these initiatives will be done before the summer holidays.

In the second half of 2005 the project and the preliminary results will be presented to interested regional actors. In the various partner countries it is planned to bring together representatives of industry, regional government, labour market organisations, agencies and research institutions in order to discuss the results and to identify the interest in future joint activities at European level. At the same time, the working group on RRP will, therefore, initiate partnership activities between the regional actors from the various countries. An idea might be to organise delegations of regional actors to Norway, North-Rhine Westphalia, Emilia-Romagna, etc. In order to allow for enough time to exchange activities, the Regional Conference, that was supposed to be held in 2006, should be postponed to 2007. The Conference should be considered an occasion to bring together regional actors coming from the different countries and might function as a kick-off for the joint activities to be shaped and implemented during the last year of the project.

The next meeting of the working group RRP will coincide with the next WORK-IN-NET meeting in November 2005 in Germany, in order to discuss both the topics which might represent the “common ground” for the working group and concrete exchange activities.

The timetable would therefore be the following:

2005

1. Presentations of the Bologna Workshop
2. Report on the Bologna Workshop
3. Electronic Discussion Platform
4. Meeting working group November 2005 in Germany
5. Feedback to the national/regional communities

2006

6. Organization/preparation of visits (delegations of entrepreneurs) to Germany/Italy/Norway
- 6a) Road Map for mutual transregional activities, in principle task 6.3)

2007

7. Conference (Modified task 6.3)
8. Joint Ventures between regions

Annex I

Broad Development Coalitions for Regional Innovation Systems

Venue

Institute for Labour Foundation (Istituto per il Lavoro)
Via Marconi, 8 - 40122 Bologna

Programme

9 May 2005

09.00-13.00 **Fact-finding mission** (coordinated by Anne Marit Skulberg and Sverre Sogge – The Research Council of Norway)
Interviews with representatives of regional ministries and the Institute for Labour Foundation

Patrizia Gigante (Ministry of Labour)
Silvano Bertini (Ministry of Economy)
Giuseppe Monterastelli and Milvia Folegani (Ministry of Health)
Francesco Garibaldi (Institute for Labour Foundation)

13.00 buffet

Seminar programme

14.00 Introduction

Volker Telljohann (Institute for Labour Foundation)

Presentation of case studies

14.30 The Italian case

Presentation of regional research programmes in Emilia-Romagna

Paola Bosi (Ministry of Labour)

Silvano Bertini (Ministry of Economy)

health)

Giuseppe Monterastelli and Milvia Folegani (Ministry of Health)

Discussion

16.15 Coffee break



16.30 The Norwegian case

Presentation of a representative project at the regional level

Tor Tønnessen (Rogaland Research)

Anne Marit Skulberg (the Research Council of Norway)

Bjørn Gustavsen (Work Research Institute)

Discussion

17.30 The German case

Presentation of the cooperation between programme administration on the Federal State level and sub-regional level

Michael Stolte (Regionalagentur Ostwestfalen-Lippe)

Friedhelm Keuken (G.I.B. NRW)

Presentation of the InnoRegio Programme and the Work and Technology Programme of the Federal State of Bremen Paul Oehlke and Claudio Zettel (DLR Bonn)

Discussion

19.00 End of the first day of the seminar

20.00 Dinner

10 May 2005

Comparative analysis of the case studies

09.00 Theme 1: Strategic objectives of research programmes

10.00 Theme 2: Research programmes and development partnerships

11.00 Coffee break

11.15 Theme 3: Implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes

12.00 Theme 4: Resources and funding mechanisms

12.30 Conclusions: Francesco Garibaldi (Institute for Labour Foundation)

13.00 buffet

Annex II

Regional research programmes on work-oriented innovations

Questionnaire

The regional dimension:

How is the regional level defined in the various national contexts?

Is there a link between regional and national research programmes? If yes, of what kind?

Research programmes and global competition:

What are the strategic objectives of the regional research programmes? What are the research priorities?

Research programmes on work-oriented innovations vs. social dumping (asianisation of income levels and working conditions') and tax dumping?

What kinds of projects are financed?

What are the target groups of regional research programmes?

Are all sectors covered or do research programmes focus on specific sectors? What about sectors with no or weak presence of social partner organisations?

In which way are Regions exposed to global competition? Do research programmes address the challenge of global competition, and, if yes, in which way?

Development partnerships:

What are the most important stakeholder groups for regional research programmes with respect to goal setting of R&D on work-oriented innovations? (Have there been changes with regard to the past? Will there be changes in future?)



Do the stakeholders only belong to the regional context or are there also external stakeholders? If yes, what role do they play and in which phase do they take part?

How is it guaranteed that sub-regional needs have a voice in regional programmes?

Are there procedures in order to take into consideration the interests of companies and workplaces?

In what way do research programmes support the cooperation between different organisations and the creation of development partnerships?

What are the means with which to promote networking? What organisations and institutions are involved in networking at the regional level? Have there been changes with regard to the past? Are there new tendencies?

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes

How is the implementation of research programmes at the sub-regional level organised?

Are there means with which to monitor and assess the success of regional research programmes in achieving the goals initially set?

Resources

How are resources allocated and what are the funding mechanisms?

General observations

Are research programmes in line with the Lisbon Strategy? What goals do research programmes refer to?

How is the relationship between competitiveness and social cohesion defined? Is there a priority of competitiveness related objectives? What is the role of sustainable development and social inclusion/cohesion?

Are regional research programmes in line with national policy/national programmes? Are there contradictions?





Editor

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