



## IN-EUR Project Newsletter No: 5

### **IN-EUR Final Newsletter**

Within the final issue of the IN-EUR Project newsletter, we would like to present you the main outcomes and results of the project, as well as to invite you to the final events being organized.

- *September 2014* -



The IN-EUR Final Events

### **Will you be in Brussels for the Open Days?**

The IN-EUR consortium invites you to attend the IN-EUR **Open Days Working Seminar on 9th October 2014** (17:30-20:30) at the Tuscan Regional Government, EU Connecting Unit, Rond Point Schuman 14. B – 1040, **Brussels**.

The event represents not only a learning experience for participants, but also a moment to take stock of progress made in the field of measuring innovation in EU sub-regions and to consider how to take this progress forward in the 2014-20 programming period.

The event is to be attended by DG Regio, DG Research and Innovation, DG Enterprise, Eurostat, Interact contact point and representatives from EU subregions. In addition, the workshop will be coordinated by EBN (European Innovation Network).

### **Final Conference in Lucca**

We are pleased to invite you to the IN-EUR **Final Conference “Orienting Local Innovation Towards Strategy 2020”**, taking place on **5th November 2014** at Province of Lucca, Cortile Carrara, 1, 55100 Lucca, Italy.

The main objective of the event is to present the final project results and promote discussion on measuring and supporting local innovation with experts and stakeholders involved in the field of innovation and measuring innovation.

Main topics covered:

- IN-EUR: cooperating throughout Europe for Innovation
- ALBI: a model for measuring Innovation
- ALBI as an innovation policy making tool
- Four case studies on Innovation around Europe

Interested to attend the above events? If yes, contact Province of Lucca for more information [politichecomunitarie@provincia.lucca.it](mailto:politichecomunitarie@provincia.lucca.it)

## **Technical Results and Summary of the Project**

### **The ALBI Model and the Testing**

IN-EUR is based on analyses of existing methodologies for measuring innovation at local level (NUTS3). Through in-depth, inter-regional exchange, partners have updated and adapted methodologies in order to produce a shared tool, the Advanced Local Balance of Innovation (ALBI) model. As a result, innovation policies are improved and local authorities can focus on existing gaps, while avoiding duplication and subsequent waste of public resources.



Innovation is the outcome of many activities and many actors. It is the product of a complex array of factors that take originate at various geographical levels and in different institutional contexts. The starting point for the design of the ALBI model has been therefore the identification of the key actors – e.g. the industrial system, universities and public research organisations, financial intermediaries – whose activities and interactions create, modify and diffuse new knowledge and innovation. The identification of these actors have led to the definition of four Areas of Investigation in which the ALBI model is structured:

- A1. Industrial system;
- A2. Education and research;
- A3. Infrastructure and framework conditions;
- A4. Governance of innovation.

The project partners agreed to design a model consisting of two levels:

**ALBI Level 1:** based on quantitative indicators with the aim of being comparable. In order to obtain complete and comparable data, the model uses existing dataset, mostly to be collected locally or available from European or International Institutions.

**ALBI Level 2:** based on detailed information, resulting from a deeper level of analysis. In the process of collecting data, partners use existing datasets, surveys and interviews with key informants. Survey-based are obtained through the submission of two questionnaires to the main local stakeholders (“Survey to firms” and “Survey to support centres”). The involvement of local stakeholders is fundamental at this level. ALBI Level 2 indicators emphasize *relevance, novelty and flexibility*.

Testing has been undertaken through the creation of 3 Direction Boards of Local Innovation (DBLI), each with a leader in charge of organisation, facilitating and reporting.

The 3 main testing areas were:

- Galati County (Romania);
- Province of Lucca (Italy);
- Roscommon County (Ireland).

All the partners of the IN-EUR project were involved in the testing phase.

Some of them tested the ALBI model in their territory, to support the findings from the three main testing areas.

## Conclusions

The testing phase undertaken by partners has represented an important step further towards a more effective and integrated governance of innovation, through the active involvement of all the relevant socio-economic actors of the territory. Regional Discussion Tables have emerged as a crucial tool to share the methodology, to build a culture of innovation and to create collaborative links between local authorities and stakeholders (e.g. firms, research and education system, support centres).



It is acknowledged that during the testing phase, some difficulties have emerged as to the implementation of the ALBI model. However, from the SWOT analysis, partners of each testing area have proposed some suggestions about policy initiatives in order to fully exploit the strengths and the opportunities of the territory, and to face the weaknesses and threats revealed by the ALBI model. It is interesting to note that a common trend that has emerged is the perceived over-bureaucratisation of public administration as the most limiting factor for local innovation. This again highlights the need for putting in place an ever more efficient, responsive and streamlined governance structure to support local firms, support centres and research institutions, taking a collaborative approach.

In what follows, we summarise the main contributions of the IN-EUR project to the improvement of local innovation policies:

- creation of a culture for measurement;
- creation of a local stakeholders network through periodic group discussions (e.g. Regional Discussion Tables);
- sharing and exchange of ideas;
- increasing general awareness on innovation;
- identifying problems and barriers for innovation policies;
- involving local stakeholders in the discussion about policy initiatives;
- building trust in local stakeholders on the fact that public institutions are aware of private companies/organisations dynamics;
- reducing the distance between private needs of innovation and public procedures.

One of the key elements of the model is the continuity of the model results and further implementation. During the project ALBI model has been already diffused among local stakeholders involved in innovation processes. However, mainstreaming the ALBI model implies the future and periodical involvement of local actors that have participated in the events and that are willing to contribute in the future design of the local innovation strategy.

More specifically, the ALBI methodology could be applied by local policy makers, not only before implementing a given innovation policy in order to evaluate the status quo of a territory, but also after the policy itself, in order to evaluate its impact. This implies that measurement of local innovation performance must be applied on a regular base.

From a more operative perspective, partners identified the following key points/good practices in order to facilitate the successful implementation of the ALBI model:

- involvement of local industry associations and consortia is crucial for the data collection process. It is therefore very important to create long term relationships with these organisations in order to increase their commitment in involving associated firms;
- avoid duplication of resources and efforts. Local industry associations, university departments and research centres are usually involved in surveys, case studies and interviews involving local firms. Better coordination and linkages with these actors would allow to gather information more effectively.
- recognise the best competencies available for collecting new and original data (primary data) or elaborating secondary data. The engagement of specialists in the distribution of questionnaires can be an effective way to increase response rates;

- discuss with local actors the whole picture. The organisation of annual meetings with key actors, public and private, to present the results of the model and the innovation performance in the territory can be an effective way to create a culture for innovation and to refine both indicators and data collection procedures.

The full DBLI report is available online at [www.in-eur.eu](http://www.in-eur.eu)



<http://www.in-eur.eu/>

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm)

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