

---

**INNO-Learning Platform**  
“A targeted action to support trans-national policy  
learning and policy cooperation”

**3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Group Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> 2007**

**Brussels, Belgium**

---

**Members**

- David **Robson**, Scottish Enterprise
- Ugor **Yüce**, Tecnology Development foundation of Turkey
- Markus **Koskenlinna**, TEKES – Finish funding agency for technology and innovation.
- Sven **Gunnar Edlund**, VINNOVA
- Mauro **Mallone**, IPI – Institute for Industrial Promotion
- Koen **De Pater**, SenterNovem
- Knut **Senneseth**, Innovation Norway
- Martin **Lyes**, Enterprise Ireland
- Michel **Ganoote**, OSEO Anvar
- Irma **Pečiak**, Polish Development Agency
- Fernando **Bello** Portuguese Innovation Agency ADI
- Schulze **Klaus**, Bradenburg Economic Development Board GmbH
- Rodolfo **Piedra**, CDTI, Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology
- Valdis **Avontis**, Latvian Investment and Development Agency

**European Commission**

- Reinhard **Büscher**, European Commission
- Christophe **Guichard**, European Commission
- Lisbeth **Bahl Poulsen**, European Commission
- Mette **Quinn**, European Commission
- Charlotte **Arwidi**, European Commission

- 
- Thomas **Heinmeier**, European Commission

#### **INNO Learning Platform**

- Aleardo **Furlani**, INNOVA Europe
- Paula **Galvão**, INNOVA Europe
- Babis **Ipektsidis**, Intrasoft International
- Liliana **Ion**, Intrasoft International
- Nils **Gabrielsson**, Inno Scandinavia
- Rebeca **Lucas**, INNOVA Europe
- Eurico **Neves**, INNOVA Europe
- Marc **Pattinson**, Inno TSD
- Lena **Matterson**, INNOVA Europe

#### **Other participants:**

- Christian **Saublens**, European Association of Regional Development Agencies (EURADA)
- Ana Moreno, ENEA Research Centre
- Tiina **Tanninen-Ahonen**, TEKES
- Goran **Ystrom**, VINNOVA
- Peter **Hahn**, VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH
- Juergen **Allesch**, Brandenburg Economic Development Board GmbH

## **2. Introduction**

### **Morning session**

The morning session opened with a presentation made by Mr Reinhard Büscher, reviewing what the ILP project has done so far. He described how the project started from first ideas on innovation policy themes to the current situation with 4 INNO Nets on services, clusters, greening industries and regional cooperation, and 2 INNO Actions under the theme of innovation culture. He stressed the importance of a results' oriented approach and reminded the main objective of the meeting with the ILSG members, namely to agree on the top priorities; to discuss the targets to be set; to assess the budgetary needs and to identify potential partners. He stressed the importance to carefully assess whether the ideas put forward can be implemented, whether the instruments/tools are available, and whether the project partners and the budgetary resources are the right ones. He also mentioned the next steps that will be followed:

- December 2007: internal conclusions;
- January 2008: public pre-information;
- June 2008: call publication;
- End 2008: internal evaluation;
- Beginning 2009: start of new INNO – Nets/Actions

The session continued with the intervention of Mr David Robson who was appointed as the chair person of the ILSG. Mr Robson explained the audience how the session had been structured and the role of the ILSG: after the presentation of each of the 6 project proposals drafted by the EC on the innovation policy themes of the feasibility studies (these fiches were distributed to the audience at the beginning of the meeting), the ILSG members were asked to give their feedback and opinion regarding their interest/appeal, clarity of exposition, improvements/changes to be introduced etc.

After this brief introduction, Ms Lisbeth Bahl Poulsen, started with a presentation of the next generation of INNO- Actions, highlighting the main traits of this initiative: (i) practical implementation of activities that have an impact on society; (ii) driven by innovation agencies in cooperation with other stakeholders; (iii) fine tune and apply mature concepts; (iv) focus on practical implementation. The theme of the next INNO- action will be the promotion of an innovation culture in Europe. The idea is that the innovation process must involve also the civil society, bridging the gap between innovation and citizens, bringing innovations to the people and getting feedback from people on innovation issues. There will be 2 areas of action: (i) Innovation for all and (ii) Innovation awareness. As far as innovation for all is concerned, the idea is to create a community of innovation policy makers and agencies ready to launch joint initiatives to promote innovation for all. This could be done through, for example, exhibitions in museums, quiz programmes in TV, projects developed jointly with companies to support innovation in schools, the creation of an on-line platform for students and young people etc. Innovation awareness will be implemented mainly through the organisation of Innovation Weeks, which will be further promoted and disseminated. The timing for this initiative would be the following:

- Year 2009: testing of concepts: organisation of 3-5 innovation weeks in regions as part of the European Year of creativity,
- Year 2010: Fine tuning of the initiatives and increase the number up to 10;
- Year 2011: European Innovation Weeks and Conference (with document explaining the concept and the innovation week toolkit)

Ms Bahl Poulsen also mentioned the following important points regarding the implementation of these initiatives:

- 3-5 core partners, involving innovation agencies and ministries and also other private organisations such as chambers of commerce, foundations, student associations etc);
- partners must reach out citizens;
- the consortium can be enlarged over time;
- 50-50 cost sharing model ;
- clear exit strategy

After Ms Bahl Poulsen's presentation, the debate was opened and several comments and suggestions aroused from the floor. A summary of the main points is presented below:

- In general, the fiches presenting Innovation for all and Innovation awareness take into account the main points of the feasibility studies
- It 'd be important to better define how the exit strategy should look like
- Private companies are supposed to support the initiatives but cannot be partners. How this would be handled?
- Need to include entrepreneurship (helping students become entrepreneurs)
- Important to distinguish between innovation based on technology or a broad concept of innovation. If feedback from citizens is expected, only technological innovation is too narrow.
- These initiatives should be introduced at regional level. Need to act locally
- Take into account the risk that some people may reject innovation as change often brings fear. The focus would then be: not to fear innovation.
- There are already successful examples of national initiatives (e.g. the Portuguese programme where the business community goes to schools or an Italian programme

for 10-year old kids promoted by UNESCO and ENEA, the researchers' nights etc). The new initiative could build on existing programmes to be developed first in a few regions and then scale them up in other regions.

- It might be too elusive to try to include all groups
- There might be two types of proposals: one that aims to raise awareness in the next generation as they are the ones who will have the ability to change things and another that identifies/captures informal groups that already exist and that have a strong capital, tapping into them to improve product and services. Examples of groups that are bound together by common experience are, for instance, patients of the health service and Lego players. These groups are a great source of expertise but do not belong to the company. The objective should be to identify them and to translate their expertise into a commercial gain. Only in this case will innovation agencies be interested to lead and promote such initiative.
- Since the budget is limited there is a strong need to be really focused and to develop a clear strategy on how to use the available funding.
- The titles of the proposals should be renamed

The following bullet points summarise the answers and clarifications provided by the EC on the above issues:

- The important issue is to talk about innovation. Many people think that innovation is done in the labs and that has nothing to do with them. Innovation Weeks show that innovation goes further away and that it is relevant to individuals. Feedback from people is of crucial importance.
- The participation of private companies and other relevant entities (e.g. museums, schools etc) is highly desirable and necessary. They will be involved in the activities since they are key actors for the success of the initiative but they will not be involved as contract-signing partners. Innovation agencies will be the contractual partners and will play the “initiator” role, involving the other actors.
- In order to create an innovation culture in practice it is necessary that people get involved. For example, Living Labs is an interesting initiative where kids and students are involved in the design of new products. Also Innovation Circus has

been a very successful initiative in many European cities like Milan. There is a need to bring innovation to the classrooms.

- For Innovation Awareness, Innovation Circus is a good initiative to boost innovation culture, with regional innovation agencies as leaders of the initiative whereas for Innovation for all it is less clear how to involve other social groups and decide who will take the lead.
- The two fiches will be reviewed and modified according to the comments from the ILSG. The awareness raising aspects of Innovation for all will be included under the Awareness raising initiative in order to avoid overlapping and the titles of the initiatives will be modified.

Mr Aleardo Furlani wrapped-up the session highlighting the following points:

- As far as the *content* of the project is concerned, the main issues to work on are: (i) schools/educational cycle/creativity for children; (ii) role of entrepreneurship (how to translate knowledge into action); (iii) social capital: there is a value, an expertise in our behaviour and the aim is to harvest both the social and the economic value. The question is how to harvest this social capital: how companies can use it to get profits, and how citizens perceive the public services (e.g. health services) can be improved.
- As far as the *structure* is concerned, the dichotomy few partners/many players is solved by including many partners in the project but without giving them a contractual role *vis a vis* the EC. It was also mentioned the strong experimental value of the initiative and the need to create synergies.

The meeting continued with Mr Christophe Guichard's presentation on INNO- Nets, whose aim is to bring together innovation policy makers and programme managers to stimulate better innovation policies. There are 4 thematic priorities, each of which has specific activities:

1. Innovation in services: organisation of an annual conference; pilot schemes to transfer research and innovation into the service sector
2. Clusters: transatlantic cooperation scheme between US and EU; evaluation of cluster policy programmes

3. Greening industries: annual conference; pilot schemes on knowledge transfer, standards; pilot schemes on eco-innovation for foreign markets
4. Regional cooperation: assessment of state aid rules and support in applying it to regional innovation plans; exchange programmes between regional agencies.

These projects should be led by a consortium of 3-5 core partners (innovation agencies and ministries) although subcontracting and external consultants are allowed under specific conditions.

After this presentation, the discussion started for each of the thematic priorities:

### Clusters

The objective of this INNO-Net would be to foster cluster cooperation between regions at programme level in order to create top class hubs for environmental technologies and industries.

Mr Marc Pattinson introduced the theme and then the floor was opened for discussion. The main comments from the ILSG members are outlined below:

- Very good idea to include cooperation outside Europe but better if not restricted only to the US. Canada, India, China and South Korea may be interesting zones to explore.
- Better to give a wide definition of clusters. Avoid narrowing the concept. Innovation is the focus
- Trans-national value chains should be included
- Governance aspects in clusters are very important and should be covered.
- The limited number of partners may be a weakness. The geographical scope should be enlarged
- Clusters have a very local/regional dimension. It'd therefore be difficult to come up with common solutions for clusters.
- Green issues should be dealt with horizontally.
- Need to evaluate clusters: ex-ante impact assessment
- Importance of procurement and lead markets

The main comments from the EC concerned the focus on policies and therefore the invitation to disregard all initiatives that do not fall into the policy level but under the Europe Innova umbrella. It was also mentioned that the choice of the US was a “diplomatic demand” and agreed that evaluation and governance are important aspects to be covered.

### **Afternoon session**

The afternoon session opened with the discussion of the theme on services innovation.

#### Services Innovation

Ms Mette Quinn from the EC presented the fiche on services innovation, which aims to develop better support mechanisms to respond to the needs of services and fast growing companies. The actions foreseen are the set-up of a think tank (horizontal) and the organisation of an annual conference on Innovation in Services and a pilot scheme on new forms of knowledge transfer of RTD-based results.

Mr Eurico Neves opened the discussion and then, comments from the ILSG members followed. The main ones are outlined here below:

- Trans-national cooperation includes actions at different levels (policy, strategy and operational), therefore cooperation must be flexible
- Cooperation with companies is a key issue in order to uncover their needs.
- There is a problem of definition regarding what is meant by services and by the service sector.
- Also measurement of innovation is an issue both domestically and internationally.
- There are not only service companies to be taken into account but also manufacturing companies that are developing/offering services.
- Several EU governments have already developed specific programmes for the service sector (e.g. Finland, Germany were the leaders but soon joined Denmark, Ireland, Holland, Iceland, France)
- Caution about introducing “gazelles”
- Fast developing sector. Need quick action. Risk is timing is long.

Reinhard Buescher acknowledged the existence of several regional and national schemes to support innovation in the service sector. He mentioned that the KIS (Knowledge Intensive Services) Platform will be soon launched by the EU aiming at developing first class services for specific service sectors. With the KIS Platform the business side will be efficiently covered and therefore the current INNO – Net will be complementary. The idea to create a think-tank of agencies is to help define better and more efficient policies, listening and seeing what other MS are doing. He also mentioned that the most difficult issue to deal with in the service area is knowledge transfer. Transferring technical innovation is easy (patenting, licensing) but leveraging research results into services (development of new business models) is something more difficult. There is the need to look at such approaches.

#### Greening industries

Mr Thomas Heinemeier presented the fiche on greening industries whose objective is to design new transnational innovation support programmes for innovation in products that would better green industries after 2013. The activities proposed under this theme are the creation of a think-tank, the organisation of an annual conference, and two pilot schemes, one in open innovation in value chains and the other on innovation for foreign markets. Ms Ana Moreno started the discussion presenting a continuous improvement cycle consisting on: legislation, public procurement, awareness, education and training, R&D, and standardisation, emphasising the importance of having the right instruments to start-up the virtuous cycle. After this, the following comments from the ILSG members followed:

- The fiche presented is relevant to the work carried out by the task force
- As far as the number of participants is concerned, it 'd be better to attract as many as possible.
- Importance of the issue of education and training in this field (e.g. to improve energy efficiency)
- Public procurement issues are important when talking about eco innovation
- The resources allocated (€2Mio) might not be sufficient

Reinhard Buescher stressed the need to put more emphasis on greening industries. The objective is not to look at the eco-industry but how to leverage eco-uses into the industry.

The fiche should be reviewed to clarify the fact that the scope is not promoting eco-innovation in general but the development of better tools to leverage user-friendly uses in the industry. He also mentioned that public procurement is not the main issue to be dealt with within this theme. As for the pilot project, he sees international knowledge transfer included but developed at a later stage. Finally, he underlined the fact that we are not looking for the exchange of “good” practices but of “better” practices, and this can be applicable to all INNO-Nets.

### Regional Cooperation

Mr Christophe Guichard presented the last fiche on regional cooperation. The idea of this INNO-Net is to develop better innovation support mechanisms that anticipate the future needs of regional innovation policy actors in view of contributing to the objective of regional cohesion in Europe. The activities foresee the creation of a think tank, support to the application of state aid rules and staff exchange programmes. Mr Aleardo Furlani launched the discussion mentioning that this fiche does not originate from the feasibility studies presented but from several discussions. He stressed the horizontal aspect of this INNO-Net compared with the previous ones and also mentioned the importance of “cohesion” among European regions. The main points from the discussion are summarised below:

- It is a good idea to exchange best practices and to create a handbook on the use of state aid rules
- Issue of whether policy makers/innovation managers lack measurable/quantitative targets/objectives
- Coordination with DG Regio important to rationalise the use of the public resources
- Need to check the commitment of all the stakeholders in the involved regions in order to make it both successful and sustainable.
- Involvement of senior staff

Part of the discussion evolved around the relevance of this INNO Net. Some ILSG members do not found it useful as they do not see its added value. However, for others it is very important since not all EU countries are at the same level and some may need guidance and support. Reinhard Buescher also stressed the fact that “not all MS are the same” and

---

that especially the NMS under-spent their funds. It'd be therefore useful to design programmes to help regions in improving the design of their policies. This could be done by working together and there is scope for mutual learning. He mentioned the difficulty to interpret new state aid rules. For example in the field of organisational innovation which will not find its way under regional development plans. The also mentioned other issues that can become new and common threats for regions such as demographic issues, brain drain, the promotion of excellence, etc. There is an interest to discuss these issues at policy level and talk to peers (peers reviews). This would justify bringing together regional policy actors.

### **Conclusions and wrap-up**

Mr Aleardo Furlani summarised the main points that aroused during the discussions and Mr Reinhard Buescher closed the meeting reminding the audience that the ILP and the ILSG are part of a new way of involving stakeholders in policy making. The ILP and the ILSG are expected not only to provide with feedback and comments but also to pre-announce the themes for next years. The establishment of a community of peers is a distinguishing trait of this project and the key for its success.

### **3. Next INNO-Learning Steering Group meeting**

The next meeting will be held after Easter, around April 2008. Further information will be soon delivered.

#### **Enclosures:**

- Thematic Fiches
- Presentations delivered (Mr Buescher, Mr Guichard, Ms Bahl Poulsen)
- Agenda of the meeting