Output factsheet: Pilot actions

Version 1

Project index number and acronym	CE1063 SMART_watch
Lead partner	Upper Silesian Agency for Entrepreneurship and Development Ltd.
Output number and title	OUTPUT O.T2.1 - Diagnosis of the stakeholders needs – analysis of the RIS services and tools "DEMAND side"
Responsible partner (PP name and number)	FH JOANNEUM Gesellschaft mbH
Project website	https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/SMART-watch.html
Delivery date	

Summary description of the pilot action explaining its experimental nature and demonstration character

Regional observatories (business support organisations) are one of the most important stakeholders of RIS intelligent markets in regions of CE. They offer various services and datasets to SMEs that normally should help the business reach their targets. The question is to what extent RIS3 actions are successful and to what extent the BSOs are performing in line with the needs of SMEs. The pilot actions developed by SMART_watch target the knowledge on the needs of SMEs and ease with monitoring of RIS. A series of workshops was held with a set of structured guidelines and a ready to use interactive ICT-based forms in order to verify the matching of supply with the demand and to find the future expectations of ROs' beneficiaries in smart specialisations*. The workshops and the tools used over the pilot action served both as the evaluation of supply side of ROs as well as the backbone for the interactive facilitation programme boosting SMEs. Namely, the SMEs could define their business goals and discuss their ecosystem impact, including the RIS3 activities. The feedback collected under this pilot action can be further used to: 1) learn on how to approach SMEs on discussing performance of regional stakeholders within the RIS3 ecosystem, 2) help in maintaining/upgrading the business models of regional observatories as well as 3) improve the policy-making process when dealing with RIS measures.

* the following smart specialisation areas were covered:

- health
- life science
- ICT
- future services
- sustainable production technics and industry 4.0
- energy, sustainability and smart building

NUTS region(s) concerned by the pilot action (relevant NUTS level)

The pilot action was successfully implemented in Jihozapad, Steiermark, De□l-Alföld, E□szak-Alföld, Veneto, Vzhodna Slovenija, Slaskie, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Piemonte and Lubelskie

Expected impact and benefits of the pilot action for the concerned territory and target groups

The key aim of the pilot action is to offer a validation of the competences of regional observatories accessible and utilized in the regions of Central Europe. First of all, as the specificity of offered services and datasets presents the supply side (also by means of being displayed in a modern and functional ICT platform), it needs the evaluation of SMEs who are the user of BSOs' (in)competences. Secondly, by using the real observations from the SMEs, the benchlearning tool was developed in order to enable the comparisons on ROs performance within the reference groups (similar regions; smart specialisations, etc.) and to identify possible areas of improvement. Thirdly, the best performing ROs (with the most matching relations between demand and supply) have become the source of good practices and a demonstrator of business models helping to set up a network of ROs collaborating towards RIS implementation and monitoring across Central Europe. Finally, the implementation of Regional Innovation Strategies is meant to support SMEs and other actors sited in smart specialisation. Here, the SMEs revealing to what extend the BSOs act as a true facilitator of the RIS implementation, may help policy-makers adapt on-the-go measures or criteria of provided support as well as learn towards future periods. It includes the perspective of transnational (dis)functionality of services supplied. The ROs are – *sensu largo* - monitoring bodies as they collaborate with their SMEs and gather feedback from them and help to set up/alter the policy instruments in their ecosystems. They enjoy technical and market knowledge of the business' sectors they give support to. Thus, the pilot action works transversal: to unveil the potential bottlenecks and to foresight some future activities needed.

Sustainability of the pilot action results and transferability to other territories and stakeholders

Sustainability of the pilot action should be seen twofold. On the one hand, the workshop formula with the guidance, that provides clear transferability to other regions, shall be repeated and target more and more beneficiaries. With the unique qualitative data, the results will be a true hands-on-the-public-sector-performance against smart specialisations. On the other hand, the validation of BSOs' performance shall provide continuous interest of the organisations in mastering their business models as well as enhance the tailor-made range of services.

As the pilot action is linked to the ICT platform created by SMART_watch project, its results will be maintained after the project ends. Moreover, the network of ROs created by the project shall keep the standard of validated services / datasets, where the pilot action may serve as the good practice. The expansion of the ROs outside the original 10 regions shall lead to even more transferability of the achieved results across the CE.

Lessons learned from the implementation of the pilot action and added value of transnational cooperation

The pilot action mobilized around 200 SMEs, 60+ ROs and policy-makers in 10 regions. One can say, it is few companies who may have impacted on the whole range of supply. In fact, the focus was set up on the quality and not the quantity of data as mostly SMEs who are 'leaders' among the clusters or chambers of commerce were asked for feedback. What has been learned from this action is basically the complexity of RIS ecosystems and still limited knowledge on smart specialization in the business.
Thus, there is a significant space in the regional and transregional ecosystems for ROs to fill-in, considering their role in achieving the goals of S3 implementation. It is especially true in the field of future offerings and datasets that ROs could provide. In general, chambers of commerce, clusters as well as other networks have been identified as the most active and supportive ROs which offer valuable services. Last but not least, although the participating organizations currently use many free services provided by the ROs, there is still a range of datasets and services identified as missing/tailorable at this point. As, more actions are to be undertaken within the SMART_watch project (i.e. ROs networking), It will become part of the transnational cooperation effort.

References to relevant deliverables and web-links
If applicable, pictures or images to be provided as annex

D.T2.1.1 - Testing functionality and relevance of Cmap with the stakeholders and end users - consultation

D.T2.1.2 - Regional (country) reports on the pilot actions - consultation workshops' results / outcomes

D.T2.1.3 - Report on the pilot actions results / outcomes

D.T2.2.1- Design of the competences map - demand side overlayer

D.T2.2.2 - ICT tool – competences map overlayer on the market demand

D.T2.3.1 - Study visits in 3 best performing observatories (3 study visits; 3 workshops; 3 reports)

D.T2.3.2 - Reports on the best practices, and operational models for the observatories

D.T2.4.1 - Manual and functional model for RIS observatories