Good Practice template

* All Good Practices identified by an Interreg Europe project and reported in the progress reports have to be submitted to the Programme.
* In order to submit a practice, you will have to register in the Interreg Europe website. Online submission will be available the first semester of 2017.
* NB: in orange: 2 optional fields. All other fields are compulsory.

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| 1. **General information**
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| **Title of the practice** | Regional Actions To Innovate Operational Programmes |
| **Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project** | *Yes*  |

In case ‘yes’ is selected, the following sections appear:

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| ***Please select the project acronym*** | RATIO |

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| **Specific objective** | Improving innovation Delivery policies.Rural SMEs to consolidate and overcome barriers to their growth and competitiveness |
| **Main institution involved** | Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster; Vidzeme Planning Region |
| **Location of the practice** | Country | *Latvia* |
| NUTS 1 | *Drop-down list* |
| NUTS 2 | *Latvia* |
| NUTS 3 | *Priekuļu novads* |

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| 1. **Detailed description**
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| **Detailed information on the practice** | *[*Cluster operates as a membership association “Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster” established as a legal entity in 2015. Before that cluster existed as a formally organized triple helix collaboration network “Vidzeme high added value and healthy food cluster”, since January 2010. Cluster is based in Vidzeme region, but as a triple helix network of members and partners, involves stakeholders also from the Riga planning region.Key focus and activity areas of the cluster are:* Networking, collaboration, knowledge and experience exchange;
* New product and technology development – food sector innovation;
* Increasing public awareness of high added value and healthy food;
* Strategic collaboration with other industry innovation players in EU: development of  international collaboration with food and related industries clusters in Baltic Sea region and  EU, development of collaboration with other industry clusters in Latvia

Currently the network involves 33 organizations, majority of them are innovative and export oriented food and drinks industry SMEs. Cluster is actively collaborating with other Food clusters and various organizations across the Baltic Sea region, and was one of the partners in BSR Stars flagship project "BSR Food - BSR Food Cluster Network around the Baltic Sea". In October 2012, Vidzeme Food Cluster received a training course on cluster development from one of the world’s leading experts in the field: Mr. Ifor Ffowcs Williams (CEO of „Cluster Navigators”) and cluster development is constantly following his „*5 stage, 12 step „* cluster development process formula.The Cluster has been involved in several collaboration projects with partners from Sweden, Finland, Denmark, France, Germany, and Estonia. Cluster companies have participated in several experience exchange, business development and training study trips in France, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Currently the Cluster is involved in the COSME programme project “5ForExcellence” which is a unique cross-industry collaboration project involving clusters operating in food, ICT and logistics industries, and is focused on enhancing Cluster management excellence.  |
| **Resources needed** | *[*Resources needed for the basic administration of the cluster management are aprox. 10-15 000 EUR a year. All additional activities, such as projects or project co-financing is funded on ad-hoc bases.  |
| **Timescale (start/end date)** | *e.g. 2010 - ongoing*  |
| **Evidence of success (results achieved)** | *[*Cluster serves as a prime example of constantly growing bottom-up, industry driven collaboration network development in the region, that during the years has grown in number of members, projects, activities and partners and has become increasingly internationally active in the internationalization processes and cross-industry collaboration. Cluster has been recognised by its peers (partners, food and related industries cluster organizations in BSR countries) as an important and successful food industry cluster in the Baltics. Companies involved in the cluster see it as a collaboration platform that allows them access information, contacts, expertise and market knowledge that helps in market penetration and development of new products, services and innovations in the food industry.Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster has been recognized by the Ministry of Economics of Latvia: <https://www.em.gov.lv/en/sectoral_policy/industrial_policy/clusters/clusters_in_latvia/> And Cluster has been awarded with the Bronze Label of the European Cluster Excellence Initiative.Since the cluster inception in 2010, it has been actively involved in many internationalization activities and projects and thus have built a strong international collaboration network with other clusters, R&D organizations and industry networks in EU. For example cluster is:* Associated partner in  project "Rural RDI milieus in transition towards smart bioeconomy clusters and innovation ecosystems (RDI2CluB), Interreg BSR 2014.-2020. programme  <http://www.rdi2club.eu/>;
* Partner in BSR Innovation express project "Cross-sectorial collaboration for efficient and sustainable food value chains in Baltic Sea Region (Pack & Food Baltic);
* Involved in the COSME programme project "Five for Cross-industry Value Chain Excellence" (5FOREXCELLENCE), represented by the  Vidzeme Planning Region; <https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/eu-initiatives/cluster-excellence/5forexcellence-five-cross-industry-value-chain>;
* Partner in the BSR Innovation express project «Enhancing market competitiveness in food SME’s-new methodologies and better interaction (EMCF)
* Involved in the Leonardo da Vinci programme project: «Vidzeme ecologic beverage manufacturers' internship in France» (represented by Vidzeme Planning Region).

In 2017. And 2018. Cluster has been invited to join three consortiums that have developed and submitted the H2020 project applications: * UNWRAPPING THE PACKAGING – REMOVING BARRIERS TO MARKET UPTAKE OF PROMISING INNOVATIVE FOOD PACKAGING (UNIVERSE), call: H2020-SFS-2016-2017
* PRoteins and Other BIOactive PRoducts from Agro-Industrial Sector (PROBIOPRAIS), call: H2020-BBI-JTI-2017

Stimulating cluster facilitated synergies among biorefineries and innovative SMEs to effectively compete in value added markets (Bioactive SME), call: H2020-INNOSUP-2018-01-two-stage |
| **Difficulties encountered/ lessons learned** |  |
| **Potential for learning or transfer** | *This good practice is a good example, how to develop from local cluster to international cluster, which is recognized internationally. How to provide support services to its members:*-Access to the European Internal marketInternationalisation support (= Access to third countries markets)-Facilitation of collaboration between members-Facilitation of cross-sectorial cooperation-Innovation Management / Support of innovation processes (internal, external)Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster is one of the most developed and internationally active food industry clusters in the Baltics and can share the experience in developing and participating in several international projects with other clusters in Europe as well as develops joint projects in the areas of food innovation, food waste to value, food packaging and design, gourmet tourism. |
| **Further information** | *https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/node/1093* |
| **Contact details** *[Technical: the contact details will be visible only to “Policy Learning Platforms registered members”* |
| **Name** | Mr. Jānis Garančs (Head of the Cluster management Board, CEO of Ltd. “Aloja-Starkelsen”) |
| **Organisation** | Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster; Ltd. “Aloja-Starkelsen” |
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| **Expert opinion**  | *[500 characters] [****Technical: to be filled in by the Policy Learning Platforms experts****]* |