

Improving policies to boost SME competitiveness and extraversion in EU coastal and rural areas where aquaculture is a driver of the regional economy

Acronym: EXTRA-SMEs

Program: Interreg-Europe

Funding: 85% ERDF 15% National Co-financing

Delegate Organization: REGION OF PELOPONNESE

Partners: Liguria Region

Northern Chamber of Commerce in Szczecin

Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency

Lapland University of Applied Sciences

University of Patras

Western Development Commission

Liguria Cluster for Marine Technologies (DLTM)

Public institution National regions development agency

Project period: Thursday, February 1, 2018 to Monday, January 31, 2022

Description:

THE PROJECT IDEA

European regions play an essential role in shaping and implementing policies for SME competitiveness and extraversion. EXTRA-SMEs represent areas of Europe where aquaculture and surrounding activities are a dynamic regional economy driver. The project partners joined forces to take advantage of the public sector's role in drawing and implementing policy and measures to increase the regional SMEs diversification and sustainability. The project has been developed to address the common territorial challenges associated with the barriers and bottlenecks to internationalisation for EXTRA-SMEs businesses through interregional cooperation, exchange and valorisation of good practices of regions, with an overall aim to improve policies on boosting regional SME competitiveness.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership has been formed upon the initiative of the Lead Partner, the Region of Peloponnese (REGPEL). REGPEL introduced the idea of exchanging successful practices with other EU regions and national bodies to improve relevant policy instruments. Exploiting contacts from previous territorial cooperation projects, utilising the cooperation platform of Interreg Europe, and using external expert consultants to support the coordination and consortium formation process, it joins the Programme for the first time along with a well-suited consortium. The partnership was formed to include partners with significant expertise in the introduction of innovative solutions and technologies to support the SME diversification and competitiveness (REGPEL, NCC, Lapland UAS, UPAT, ADR-BI), and partners with strong commitment to foster public administrations' contribution to boosting SME competitiveness and internationalization in general (LIGURIA, Lapland UAS, WDC, NRDA). Finally, DLTM was invited as an advisory partner to enhance the knowledge base of the consortium and support project activities.

PARTNERS' CONTRIBUTION

Partners provided detailed information on the policy instruments addressed, and suggestions on the scope of project activities, content of outputs & results, and allocation of tasks based on their profile, expertise and expected benefits from the project. Partners deliberated on these issues and discussed the proposal several times between March and June 2017. An external consultant was involved to review partners' input and integrated it into the proposal, thus assuming a coordinating role in preparation activities and assuring that the optimum common ground for the project activities would be the one the proposal built upon.

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