

ACTION PLAN OF THE PROJECT:

IMPROVE THE RIS3 EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL DISCOVERY PROCESS (BEYOND EDP)

PARTNER: LODZKIE REGION



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GENERAL INFORMATION

- *Project: Improve the RIS3 effectiveness through the management of the entrepreneurial discovery process (Beyond EDP)*
- Partner organisation: Lodzkie Region
- Other partner organisations involved:
 - Center for Cooperation with the Economy, Innovation and Technology Transfer of the Lodz University of Technology,
 - Center for Technology Transfer of the University of Lodz,
 - Faculty of Economics and Sociology, University of Lodz / Department of Development Economics.
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INTRODUCTION

Increasing the efficiency of investments in knowledge and innovation and enhancing the quality of research and development (R&D) in order to boost the level of competitiveness are desirable directions for the development of the internal market of the European Union. Such a concept has been included both in the provisions of the Lisbon Strategy, as well as in the current Europe 2020 Strategy. In order for this idea to become a reality, cooperation of all entities belonging to the regional innovation system is necessary. To implement the concept based on the assumption, in accordance with which the innovation development should proceed, based on smart specialisations of the regions, the Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS 2030 was developed in 2013.

Conducting analyses of macro and microeconomic data and interviews, as well as organising a series of meetings with representatives of selected groups of the local community made it possible to draw up a document in which the directions of the desired development were indicated. It also made it possible to identify areas of smart specialisations, creating an opportunity to improve the position of the region in terms of innovation and competitiveness in comparison to Polish voivodships.

In order to identify them, the sectors with the greatest development potential in the region have been identified. They include:

- Modern textile and fashion industry (including design);
- Advanced building materials;
- Medicine, pharmacy, cosmetics;
- Energy, including renewable energy sources;
- Innovative agriculture and agri-food processing;
- IT and telecommunications.

Moreover, the key technologies of the region have been identified, which should be applied for the development of the above mentioned industries. Among them there were:

- Biotechnology;
- Nanotechnology and functional materials;
- Information and communication technologies;
- Mechatronics.

The authors of the Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS 2030 sought to show the possibilities of increasing the socio-economic potential of creation, diffusion and demand for innovations. They pointed out that the development of innovativeness of the Lodzkie Region is possible provided that entities belonging to the regional innovation system will contribute to the effective use of the existing potential of the region's production factors. This leads to the necessity to support the development of innovation on the basis of cooperation between: entrepreneurs (in particular SMEs), scientific and research units, business support institutions and administration.

Another step towards the implementation of the RIS3 concept in the Lodzkie Region was the development of a project entitled "Developing Sectoral Policies of the Lodzkie Region" as part of the Regional Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Lodzkie Region 2007-2013. It took place with the full application of the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process. The effect of the cooperation was the development of operational documents dedicated to particular key industries. The documents included the results of work related to the identification of entrepreneurs' needs and barriers hindering the development of innovativeness. In addition, technology and key industries were mapped during the project. The results of this measure were included in the document entitled "List of regional smart specialisations of the Lodzkie Region and the resulting specialisation niches", which forms the basis for defining economic areas in which applications for co-financing of innovative projects under the Regional Operational Programme of the Lodzkie Region 2014-2020 should be placed.

The accession of the Lodzkie Region to the project entitled "Improve the RIS3 effectiveness through the management of the entrepreneurial discovery process (**Beyond EDP**)" was aimed at raising awareness among the representatives of important entities belonging to the innovation ecosystem in the region as regards the organisation of this cooperation with the use of the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (a bottom-up approach). This knowledge was acquired both through participation in visits organised by partner regions (Peer Reviews) and participation in Taskforces. In this way, it is possible to draw up this Action Plan, which is to visibly improve (and bring about certain effects) the regional innovation policy of the region in the years 2019-2020.

The actions foreseen in the Action Plan belong to two categories, according to the source of their origin:

1. Implementation of advice provided by partners in relation to mechanisms supporting the development of innovativeness in the Lodzkie Region, as defined in the Peer Review.
2. Implementation of selected good practices applied by other project partners.

The Action Plan covers all the entities belonging to the quadruple helix with whom cooperation in the implementation of the EDP will be possible. Meetings are currently being organised in order to gain knowledge of the activities planned by these entities in the years 2019-2021 (Framework Action Plan. The necessity of its preparation results from the Regional Innovation Strategy for Lodzkie Region (LORIS 2030). Their results will allow to draw up a list of people particularly interested in starting cooperation (currently we do not have one). However, we are open to everyone.

REGIONAL INNOVATION POLICY FOR THE LODZKIE REGION

The Action Plan aims to impact:

Investment for Growth and Jobs programme.

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS 2030.

INNOVATIVE POTENTIAL

Market

In the context of functioning on the single internal market of the European Union, the position of the region in the Regional Innovation Scoreboard of the European Commission is of crucial importance. In 2017, the Lodzkie Region was among the group of moderate innovators, on the 197th position (source: Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2017, p. 28). For comparison, it is worth

mentioning that during work on the creation of the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS2030, the Lodzkie Region was classified in the ranking as a "Modest innovator - medium level". (Source: Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2012, p. 44). This proves that the state of innovation in this region is gradually improving.

Enterprises

In the Lodzkie Region, microenterprises dominate (they employ up to 9 employees). They constitute 95.2% of the total number of enterprises. The share of small enterprises (10-49 employees) amounts to 4%. For medium (employing from 50 to 249 people) and large enterprises, this share was 0.69% and 0.116%, respectively. Micro and small enterprises usually have a low innovation potential. They also lack their own research and development facilities. In 2014-2016, the average percentage of innovative industrial enterprises from the Lodzkie Region was 16.1 % (in the period under examination, they marketed at least one product or process). This is a result below the national average (18%), which ensures 14th position in comparison to other voivodships (there are 16 voivodships in Poland). In contrast, for service companies this value was 10%, given the national average of 14.05% (9th position in the country). The surveyed entrepreneurs of the industrial sector as the most frequent reason for not conducting (or conducting unsuccessfully) innovative activity indicate the lack of a convincing reason for such an activity (66.3% of answers). On further positions, the following reasons were identified: low demand for innovative solutions on the market, lack of possibility to finance innovation from internal sources (loans, private equity funding, innovation grants or subsidies) and a high degree of market competitiveness. On the other hand, among the non-innovative service enterprises, the most frequently cited reason for not implementing innovation is also "no convincing reason" for such an activity (85.8% of answers). Another factor of considerable importance for enterprises based in Lodz was lack of good ideas for innovation. In the enterprises in which the implementation of innovations was considered, too much competition on the market and the lack of possibility to finance innovations from internal sources of the company turned out to be the decisive barriers. The fourth argument is the difficulty in obtaining public grants or subsidies for innovation.

Human capital

In the years 2010-2016, the share of people with higher education increased from 18.7% to 24.2% among the total population aged 15-64 (Lodzkie Region was ranked 7th in the country). The number of research staff has also increased. In 2015, it amounted to 8,846 people (an increase of 5.6% compared to 2014). R&D personnel is 0,7% of total number of people working in the region, of which the number of R&D personnel amounted to 6,712 people, which gives the result of 75.9% of R&D personnel in the region. In the ranking of voivodships it gives a medium, 7th position (one position higher than in 2014).

In terms of human capital necessary for an innovative economy, a concerning phenomenon is the progressive depopulation of the region (e.g. population ageing, negative natural growth, negative balance of migration). Currently, this phenomenon also manifests itself in the dynamically decreasing number of students. There is also a downward trend in the interest in vocational education, as evidenced by the declining number of students of basic vocational schools and, to a lesser extent, secondary vocational schools. Between 2010 and 2015, the number of basic vocational schools in the region fell from 85 to 77.

Innovation Centres

There are two Special Economic Zones in the region: Lodz and Starachowice. Entrepreneurs interested in commencing activities covered by public aid granted by the Zones may obtain support in the amount of up to 55% of eligible investment costs or two-year labour costs, granted on the basis of a relevant decision, for the period from 10 to 15 years. Moreover, in cooperation with 11 Partners (apart from regional enterprises globally developing Polish technological thought, there are international corporations such as Ericsson, PwC, Procter&Gamble, Robert Bosch, Siemens), the Lodz Special Economic Zone has created an acceleration programme - Spark 2.0. Its aim is to combine the potential of start-ups with resources, infrastructure and experience of mature business, while educating medium and large companies on how to open up to innovation and cooperation with start-ups.

The self-government of the Lodzkie Region is a co-owner of a number of the largest business support institutions in the region. The oldest institution of this type is the Lodz Agency of Regional Development (ŁARR), established in 1991 as a unit supporting the development of the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises sector through the development and implementation of programmes financed by the European Commission from EU funds. Under the Jeremie 2 project, the ŁARR provides support from:

- Loan Fund for start-up microenterprises for investment and working purposes
- Loan Fund for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises for investment purposes.

A slightly more specialised unit is "Bionanopark" sp. z o.o. and the Technological Incubator of the Bionanopark. It is a science and technology park with an attractive research, investment and incubation offer addressed to companies and institutions operating in the field of advanced technologies. The Park's offer is based on a commercial lease of premises adapted to running a business and access to conference facilities and business consulting, as well as assistance in searching for external sources of financing. Start-up companies can also count on rent discounts in the form of *de minimis* aid up to 60%.

There are four large public universities in Lodzkie Region: the University of Lodz, the Lodz University of Technology, the Academy of Fine Arts and the Medical University, as well as the largest non-public university in Poland - the Social Sciences Academy. There are Technology Transfer Centres on their premises. Moreover, in the structure of the Lodz University of Technology, there is an Information Technology Centre, where future programmers are educated with the use of the latest technologies. A close associate of the Centre is a cluster operating in the IT sector - ICT Central Poland. There are also thriving scientific institutes in the Lodzkie Region: Institute of Horticulture in Skierniewice, MORATEX Institute of Security Technologies, Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres, Institute of Leather Industry, Institute of Textiles, Institute of Polish Mother's Memorial Health Centre, Institute of Occupational Medicine, Institute of Biotechnology of Agri-food Industry, Institute of Medical Biology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lodz, Molecular and Macromolecular Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lodz, International Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences - European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology, Research and Development Centre of Textile Machinery POLMATEX-CENARO. It is also possible to indicate institutions whose activity supports innovation. The main ones are: Lodz Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Regional Chamber of Commerce in Sieradz, Regional Chamber of Commerce in Skierniewice, Foundation for Enterprise

Development in Lodz, Foundation for Enterprise Development in Poddębice, Zelów Commune Development Foundation, Bełchatowsko-Kleszczowski Park Przemysłowo-Technologiczny Ltd., Agencja Rozwoju Regionu Kutnowskiego JSC Lodz, Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Radomsko.

Diagnosed barriers to development

The problem that can be observed among entrepreneurs in the Lodzkie Region is the reluctance to undertake innovative activity. Cooperation within cluster initiatives amounts to 17.5%. This gives it the 7th position in the country. Cooperation in the scope of innovative activity among service enterprises in the Lodzkie Region run at the level of 1.7% of all enterprises (9th place in the country). The value of this indicator for industrial enterprises amounted to 4.5% of all enterprises (11th result in the ranking of regions). The value of the share of expenditures incurred by the sector of enterprises in the total expenditures on R&D activity is not optimistic either. In the Lodzkie Region, it amounts to 30.3% and is significantly lower than the national share (46.6%). The outlays on R&D activity per capita amount to PLN 280.5, a much lower value of the indicator than the national average (PLN 420.1). An important problem is the lack of systematic (organised) cooperation between entities belonging to the regional innovation system.

EXISTING ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF CONDUCTING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL DISCOVERY PROCESS

The Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region (adopted in 2013) does not contain provisions on the implementation of the entrepreneurial discovery process. This does not mean, however, that this process has been marginalised in the region's innovation policy. It manifested itself intuitively in projects implemented to increase the level of regional market innovativeness. This was particularly the case during the work on the following:

- **Sectoral Policies (2015)** - operational documents for each of the 6 regional smart specialisations, drawn up with the participation of representatives of the quadruple helix;
- **Forums of Inspiration (2015/2016)** - they have made it possible to indicate directions for the development of regional smart specialisations by raising the level of knowledge about innovation and establishing permanent forms of cooperation between entities creating the regional innovation ecosystem.

Conditions were also created for the continuous implementation of the entrepreneurial discovery process for the purpose of consulting, initiating and implementing all activities aimed at supporting innovation. In December 2015, the **Innovation Council of the Lodzkie Region** was established. It is composed of representatives of entities whose activities may contribute to the improvement of innovativeness (universities, scientific and research units, business support institutions, entrepreneurs, public administration). Members of the Council have also been assigned to work dedicated to specific smart specialisations of the Lodzkie Region (**Key Industry Platforms**). Moreover, **Business Innovation Centres** were established in November 2016. It is a network of entities (in six main locations of the Lodzkie Region, covering the whole region), where 11 mobile business advisors currently operate. Their role is to integrate the business environment by supporting the communication process between the entities belonging to the quadruple helix. Through direct contact with entrepreneurs, they have an opportunity to profoundly familiarise with their needs. The support provided by the advisers is intended in particular to:

- Adjust the regional offer to actual business needs,
- Increase the level of cooperation between actors of economic life,
- Enable access to information on support mechanisms to a wider group,

- undertake other activities implementing the assumptions of the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS 2030.

Moreover, in 2017-2018 a **methodology for monitoring the innovativeness** of the Lodzkie Region was developed, with the use of the entrepreneurial discovery process. It allows to obtain information on the level of innovation in all sectors of the economy (and even to examine the inter-sectoral impact, which results in obtaining information on the creation of innovation at the interface between different industries), in order to ensure flexibility of support provided as part of the implementation of the concepts of regional smart specialisations. They can be applied during the update of the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS 2030. The assumptions adopted in the scope of the entrepreneurial discovery process make it possible to identify enterprises with significant innovative potential and to identify possible areas of economic cooperation. The core of the methodology adopted was the integration of two perspectives for building the innovative capacity of the region:

- sectoral - within which domains of specialisation and technological advantage have been defined in a study,
- regional - focused on the specificity of different specialisations and concentration and complementarity of regional potential needed for the development of these economic areas.

Since the adoption of the Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS 2030 there has been an increase in the importance of the entrepreneurial discovery process. This had an impact on the number of activities carried out with its application, an increase in knowledge and experience among those who participated in it. Nevertheless, it has never become an official (formal) element of RIS3 management. In this area, there is still much to be done in the Lodzkie Region. The main barriers in this respect are:

- formal barrier - lack of competences assigned to entities forming part of the regional innovation system,
- mental barriers:
 - lack of trust resulting in the rarity of the model of open innovation in business strategies,
 - lack of awareness among enterprises of the benefits that can be achieved as a result of cooperation,

- low innovation culture among regional companies,
- unwillingness of the entities comprising the regional innovation system (e.g. universities, technology transfer centres or special purpose vehicles) to cooperate,
- organisational barriers:
 - lack of integrated knowledge of the activity of particular entities belonging to the regional innovation system (lack of an innovation potential base),
 - insufficient skills in the creation and implementation of innovation, both at universities and among entrepreneurs,
 - insufficient access to laboratory and technological base for start-ups,
 - lack of a system for verifying the degree of commercialisation of innovative solutions created at universities (e.g. the number of inventions that have a real chance of being marketed),

There is also a legal barrier in the form of complex regulations concerning support for enterprises and universities in the area of innovation. Unfortunately, this is a problem that goes beyond the competences of the regional authorities.

MAIN TOOLS SUPPORTING INNOVATIVENESS (IN CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS)

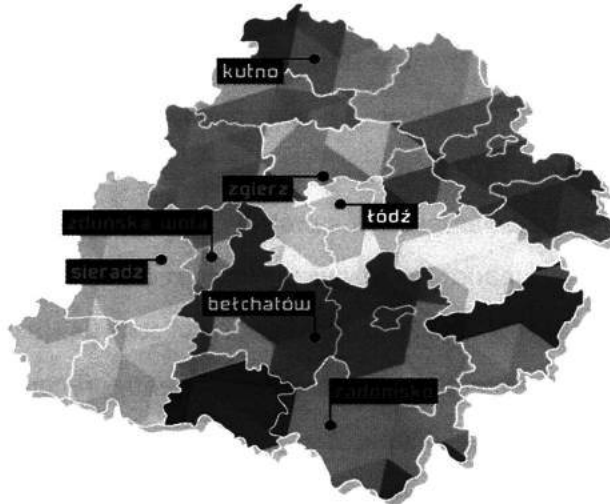
- Economic Information System (2017-2019) - consisting in launching tools to support SMEs in improving their innovativeness, competitiveness and supporting the process of internationalisation. As part of this task, a system of communication with business has been launched in the form of Live Chat and a hotline.
An innovation hub, SkyHub, has also been created to support SMEs.
The following forms of support are available in the Hub:
 - the Council of Mentors;

- organisation and coordination of training/workshops;
- organisation of B2B meetings;
- expert advice;
- networking meetings (connectors);
- conferences, thematic lectures (e.g. money makers - a series of events dedicated to raising funds with investment funds, meet the business - meetings with successful entrepreneurs, workshops in various fields: industrial property law, protection of personal data in enterprises, presentation skills, public speaking, etc.).

Moreover, SkyHub employees take part in trade fairs and study visits of both in Poland and abroad.



- Export Support Office – this task is to develop an integrated mechanism of export support. Under this measure, a team of export consultants is to be established, which will be responsible for supporting the process of internationalisation and care for investors, broken down by industry or by foreign markets. The office was established in November 2017.
- Launching a network of Business Innovation Centres operating in the existing 7 business support institutions in the main sub-regions of the Lodzkie Region.



Currently, they are served by 11 mobile business advisors (who visit entrepreneurs at their place of business). They also take part in business breakfasts, group meetings and networking. The objectives of their activities are:

- adjustment of the regional offer to actual business needs,
- integration of the business environment and support for communication between the regional quadruple helix entities. Owing to this, the widest possible group of stakeholders is to gain access to information on innovation support mechanisms in the region.

Measures planned to be undertaken in 2019-2020.

1. Development of a **Framework Action Plan** for the implementation of the assumptions of the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS 2030. The aim of this operational document is to create a concept of cooperation between entities included in the regional innovation system **for the years 2019-2021.**

It is assumed that it will include action plans of selected entities which have a significant impact on supporting the development of innovativeness in the region. In this way, it will be possible to plan, in the future, specific projects to be implemented by the Marshal Office of Lodzkie Region on its own or in cooperation with external entities, as well as by external entities. The development of this document is to be the first step towards the creation of sustainable cooperation aimed at supporting the development of innovativeness in the Lodzkie Region.

Taking into account the fact that 2020 ends the period of the current financial perspective (2014-2020), it is assumed that the summary of the Framework Action Plan will be correlated with the achievements to date in the implementation of the Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region - "LORIS 2030".

2. Development and implementation of a project called **Lodzkie4business+**, in which, apart from the existing forms of support, the following activities are also envisaged:
 - Regional Networking - undertaking a number of activities (e.g. organisation of seminars or meetings) to bring together representatives of entrepreneurs, representatives of science, business support organisations, non-governmental organisations or competent units of regional government. In addition, a search for business partners throughout the country for regional entrepreneurs is planned.
 - Grow up Your Business - activities aimed at increasing the knowledge of entrepreneurs in the field of internationalisation (organisation of workshops, training sessions and conferences aimed at preparing entrepreneurs to operate on foreign markets).
 - Go Global - support for regional entrepreneurs' activity on the international arena. To this end, it is planned to organise missions, study visits and trips to domestic and foreign fairs, both as exhibitors and participants.

INNOVATION POLICY AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

In order to ensure the effectiveness of innovation policy, it is necessary to develop a model of inter-institutional cooperation as part of the regional innovation system, in which the Marshal Office will play an initiating and coordinating role. The lack of principles for such action in the current version of the Regional Innovation Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS 2030 makes it necessary to fill this gap. In order to meet this task, the Innovation Council of the Lodzkie Region was established, divided into Key Industry Platforms. However, the current activity of these entities is not characterised by high intensity, and precise rules of their cooperation have not been formulated either. It is therefore necessary to create appropriate mechanisms for action.

Another problem is lack of cooperation between the relevant entities in the field of technology transfer. It is therefore necessary to increase activities in this area using a properly constructed model of conducting an entrepreneurial discovery process.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

According to the concept adopted in the project, each of the partner regions was to organise a meeting at which they would present a Peer Review containing information on the mechanisms developed to support innovation. The information was to include good practices and the challenges faced by the region in carrying out the entrepreneurial discovery process. Other project partners should address the presented material, formulating proposals for recommendations, the implementation of which could affect the improvement of the innovation policy implemented so far. In addition, one of the partners was required to evaluate the Peer Review, and include proposals for improvements in this area.

In the case of the Lodzkie Region, the meeting of the project partners took place between 12 and 14 September 2017. During this event, valuable recommendations were formulated for the Lodzkie Region. It also included a report drawn up by a representative of the evaluating region (Northern Netherlands Region). Moreover, during the project implementation, good practices of partner regions were identified, the application of which creates an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of the regional innovation policy through the use of the entrepreneurial discovery process to a greater extent.

The present Action Plan contains all information obtained in the course of the project which can also be applied in the Lodzkie Region (recommendations provided during the Peer Review and in the evaluation report, as well as selected good practices). Their implementation should complement the already adopted concept of supporting innovativeness, with maximum use of the potential existing in the region.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Creating an operational document containing the rules of conducting EDP in the Lodzkie Region

The implementation of this measure was recommended during the Peer Review which was presented during the project partners' meeting on 12-14 September 2017 in Lodz. Its aim was to present the assumptions and status of the implementation of the innovation policy for the Lodzkie Region and to create opportunities for evaluation (and transfer of valuable advice) by the Project Leader and Partners. As a consequence, it would lead to the improvement of the hitherto conducted activities in the scope of supporting innovativeness using the entrepreneurial discovery process.

Elements of the document		Actions to be taken in this respect
1	Identification (and creation of a monitoring methodology) of the region's potential for effective implementation of the entrepreneurial discovery process.	Meetings with representatives belonging to the regional innovation system of the Lodzkie Region. Their aim will be to obtain information on the activities planned by the representatives with an aim of supporting innovation in the region in the years 2019-2021 (Framework Action Plan under the Regional Strategy for the Lodzkie Region LORIS2030). This will allow to gain knowledge about the possibility of carrying out joint activities (e.g. projects) by the Marshal Office of the Lodzkie Region in cooperation with these entities, as well as by these entities.
		Selection of representatives of specific entities for permanent cooperation (those who wish to do so).
		Developing a methodology for monitoring the innovative potential of the region (including the existing research infrastructure, patents granted and technologies developed in scientific and research centres).

		<p>Creation of a regional offer for entrepreneurs containing solutions supporting the development of innovativeness (database containing relevant information).</p> <p>Drawing up a list of needs of the entrepreneurs, taking into account the specificity of individual regional smart specialisations (mainly based on information obtained by the Business Innovation Centres).</p>
2	<p>Creating mechanisms for effective management of the network of cooperation as part of the regional innovation system</p>	<p>Adjustment of the offer to the identified needs of entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Developing a model for interinstitutional cooperation as part of the regional innovation system, in which the Marshal Office will perform the initiating and coordinating function (using Good Practice No. 1: Thematic Working Groups; Extremadura Region, Spain, and No. 2: STIMULATE Research Campus, Magdeburg; Region: Saxony-Anhalt, Germany).</p>
3	<p>Development of a management knowledge acquisition mechanism to acquire knowledge from managers of the most innovative enterprises (how they would manage the development of innovativeness in the region, if they were decision-makers).</p>	<p>Activities in this respect will be undertaken as part of the functioning of Thematic Working Groups (Good Practice no. 1) of events in which managers of enterprises (organised by or with the participation of the Marshal Office of the Lodzkie Region) will participate, as well as during individual meetings.</p>
4	<p>Use of knowledge resulting from the work of the Taskforces (according to needs and possibilities)</p>	<p>Among the information collected in the "Synthesis report of the three taskforces on EDP Management as part as Beyond EDP project" in the current situation of the Lodzkie Region, those related to the following are of particular value:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous involvement of quadruple helix stakeholders in the process (motivation and communication), • Methodology for conducting the entrepreneurial discovery process, • Monitoring the entrepreneurial discovery process, • Feedback mechanism to policy makers.
5	Methodology of monitoring the entrepreneurial discovery process	<p>The methodology will be developed after the above steps have been implemented, to ensure its consistency with the actually taken actions. In particular, it will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity of Thematic Working Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of institutions with which cooperation is undertaken as part of different smart specialisations, - Number of meetings of individual groups, - Activities planned, - Measures implemented (including their effects in the form of impact on the development of innovation in the region), • Effects of activities of institutions included in the regional innovation system undertaken on their own (outside the area of activity of Thematic Working Groups), • Other activities described in the section devoted to the activity of advisors from Business Innovation Centres. <p>The entrepreneurial discovery process will also be monitored from the point of view of the effectiveness of the allocation of funds from the Regional Operational Programme for the Lodzkie Region 2014-2020, in accordance with the needs of the region.</p>

The action will be financed from the budget of the Lodzkie Region.

2. Using the activity of advisors from Business Innovation Centres

The implementation of this measure was also recommended during the Peer Review, which took place at in Lodz. Business Innovation Centres were then recognised as an instrument for the implementation of the regional innovation policy for the Lodzkie Region, which has an enormous potential and enables effective support for other measures in this area. This is due to the fact that advisors employed in the Centres have direct contact with a large number of enterprises, which allows them to get to know their needs in detail. They can also act as an excellent “bridge” between the different entities belonging to the regional innovation system (feedback mechanism). Taking this measure may therefore contribute to increasing the accuracy of decisions aimed at supporting the development of innovation in this region. They should also be considered as supporting the implementation of Measure no. 1. In this respect, the following activities are to be undertaken:

- Obtaining information from entrepreneurs enabling:
 - monitoring their needs (this is a good alternative in a situation where entrepreneurs do not show willingness to fill in questionnaires),
 - building a proper offer of the region with adequate possibilities of satisfying them,
- Selection of innovation leaders with whom it is worth establishing permanent cooperation,
- Promoting cooperation between businesses and regional universities and business support institutions (using Good Practice 2: STIMULATE Research Campus, Magdeburg; Region: Saxony-Anhalt, Germany).
- Increasing the use of funds from the Regional Operational Programme for the Lodzkie Region 2014-2020.

It is also planned to train advisors on the essence and mechanism of the entrepreneurial discovery process.

The action will be financed from the budgets of own projects of the Lodzkie Region. It is also possible to obtain funds from projects of the institutions with which cooperation will be established.

USE OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Thematic Working Groups. Region: Extremadura, Spain

The concept of Thematic Working Groups will be included in an operational document containing the rules of conducting EDP in the Lodzkie Region. It will be an important element of the management of the cooperation network as part of the regional innovation system. Moreover, it will be used to acquire knowledge in the field of management from managers of the most innovative companies. It is assumed that Thematic Working Groups will actively participate in building an offer tailored to the needs of entrepreneurs, taking into account the specificity of individual smart specialisations of the Lodzkie Region. The results of their work can also be used to update the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS 2030.

This practice will be used as part of Measure no. 1.

2. Use of a good practice cooperation model: STIMULATE Research Campus, Magdeburg. Region: Saxony-Anhalt, Germany

The existing application of the effects of the Lodzkie4business project (Business Innovation Centres, SkyHub, Export Support Office) can be extended by using the cooperation model employed in STIMULATE Research Campus from the German region of Saxony-Anhalt. According to the original assumption, this would consist in drawing up an inventory of the needs for modern technologies and scientific and research services of the entrepreneurs from the region (they would be compiled during meetings with the employees of our entities). The inquiries in consideration will be forwarded to universities and selected research and development centres to examine the possibility of developing technological solutions to meet a specific need. This model would make it possible to increase the use of the region's potential and create the conditions for establishing cooperation for the uptake and diffusion of innovation, which has not existed so far (currently it is carried out intuitively, only for the needs of specific activities).

This practice will be used in Measure no. 1 and Measure no. 2.

THE ROLE OF THE ACTION PLAN IN IMPROVING THE INNOVATION POLICY OF THE LODZKIE REGION

The Marshal Office of the Lodzkie Region is the institution responsible for initiating and coordinating activities aimed at shaping and implementing an effective innovation policy in this region (it is also responsible for the implementation of this Action Plan).

It is assumed that participation in the project entitled "Improve the RIS3 effectiveness through the management of the entrepreneurial discovery process (Beyond EDP)" will have the following effects:

	Current situation in the region	Expected effect of the project
1	Lack of specific tasks of entities comprising the regional innovation system	Drawing up an operational document containing all the necessary rules of network operation in accordance with the assumptions of the entrepreneurial discovery process. The adopted (and proven in practice) methodology may be implemented in the future to the provisions of the updated version of the Regional Innovation Strategy LORIS2030. This would close the existing gap in this scope completely.
2	So far, the cooperation with consultative and advisory bodies of the Regional Board, such as the Innovation Council or the Key Industry Platform belonging to its structures, has been carried out sporadically and intuitively until November 2018 (at that time the entire composition of the Regional	Development and implementation of a new concept of cooperation as part of the Key Industry Platforms (Thematic Working Groups from the Spanish region of Extremadura) .

	Board changed). Currently, it does not take place.	
3	Lack of a developed system for monitoring the innovative potential of the region	Using information obtained by advisors from the Business Innovation Centres (as well as the Export Support Office and the Innovation Hub - SkyHub) to create a database containing an integrated offer of the region for entrepreneurs (and other entities).
4	Individualism of the activities of entities belonging to the regional innovation system (and high competition between them).	Development of principles of inter-institutional communication and cooperation, allowing for joint activities of these entities (the Marshal Office of the Lodzkie Region will play a coordinating role in it). It is expected that the application of the cooperation model employed at STIMULATE Campus in the German region of Saxony-Anhalt will also enable the effects of this measure to be strengthened by exploiting the potential for technology transfer existing in the Lodzkie Region.

TIMETABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

Measure no. 1: Creating an operational document containing the rules of conducting EDP in Lodzkie Region.

	Tasks to be performed	Planned date
1	Identification and creation of a methodology of the region's potential for effective implementation of the entrepreneurial discovery process.	October 2019
2	Creating mechanisms for effective management of the cooperation network as part of the regional innovation system.	December 2019
3	Developing a methodology for collecting information on the region's offer for entrepreneurs (database).	March 2020
4	Creating mechanisms for acquiring knowledge in the field of management from managers of the most innovative enterprises (how they would manage the development of innovativeness in the region if they were decision-makers).	April 2020
5	Developing rules for using the knowledge contained in the "Synthesis report of the three taskforces on EDP Management as part as Beyond EDP project".	April 2020
6	Developing a methodology for monitoring the entrepreneurial discovery process.	May 2020
7	Completion of work on the document.	June 2020

Measure No. 2. Using the activity of advisors from Business Innovation Centres.

Task to be performed		Planned date
1	Training of advisors on the essence and mechanism of conducting the entrepreneurial discovery process.	June 2019
2	Creation of a methodology for monitoring the needs of entrepreneurs (database).	December 2019
3	Selection of innovation leaders of the region.	June 2020

It is reserved that the implementation of this Action Plan will be carried out in a flexible manner, which may include the introduction of updates resulting from possible significant changes in circumstances that may affect its implementation. The aim of adopting such a concept is to ensure that its assumptions are precisely adjusted to the currently implemented innovation policy of the region.

MONITORING

The entity responsible for monitoring is the Promotion Department of the Marshall Office of the Lodzkie Region. The monitoring report will contain information on the status and timeliness of the implementation of particular measures indicated in the timetable for the implementation of this Action Plan (with particular emphasis on good practices from the selected regions). The following indicators will be used in this respect:

- Number of meetings as part of the network (comprised of quadruple helix entities):
 - for the purposes of the development of the Framework Action Plan for 2019-2021
 - as part of the functioning of the Thematic Working Groups
- Number of entities with which the Marshall Office of the Lodzkie Region will establish permanent cooperation (as part of the network) for the purpose of conducting the entrepreneurial discovery process,
- Number of records in the database containing the region's integrated offer for enterprises (e.g. data obtained as part of the activities of the Technology Observatory, as well as the offer of regional business support institutions, etc.),
- Number of start-ups supported owing to the network cooperation (by categories of support),
- Number of records in the database containing information on the needs of entrepreneurs (information obtained by advisors from Business Innovation Centres),
- Number of trained advisors from Business Innovation Centres (Export Support Office and SkyHub employees), on the essence and mechanism of the entrepreneurial discovery process,
- Information obtained from advisors from Business Innovation Centres:
 - percentage share of entrepreneurs interested in the development of innovativeness in the number of enterprises visited by advisers,
 - needs of entrepreneurs in the scope of innovation support,
 - actions taken by business advisers (number and type),

- Solutions that will be implemented on the basis of established cooperation (e.g. joint projects) in relation to the needs of enterprises reported by entrepreneurs to advisors from Business Innovation Centres.

In addition, it is planned to launch a comparative analysis of the implementation of the Action Plan with the value of the allocation of resources from the EU funds for projects in line with the different smart specialisations of the Lodzkie Region and with the development of the values of selected economic indicators used to monitor the innovativeness of the region's economy. It is assumed that they will include:

- *Share of expenditures on R&D activity financed from the sector of enterprises in total expenditures on R&D activity,*
- *Ratio of internal expenditures on R&D to the GDP (current prices),*
- *Employment in R&D:*
 - *total,*
 - *in the business sector*
- *Value of the Regional Innovation Index.*

Due to the fact that the market effects of the implementation of the Action Plan will not be immediate, and the publication of the values achieved by specific economic indicators is delayed, it can be assumed that it will not be possible to present the results of the comparative analysis until the end of the project implementation. However, they will be important for the region at a later date.

INSPEKTOR

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