



Action Plan

South Netherlands

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1. General information

Project: Sport for Growth and Healthy & Vital Communities

Partner organisation: Cluster Sports and Technology (DAEB on behalf of the province of Noord Brabant)

Other partner organisations involved:

Region: South Netherlands

NUTS2 region: NL41 (North Brabant)

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2. Background

Inno4Sports project

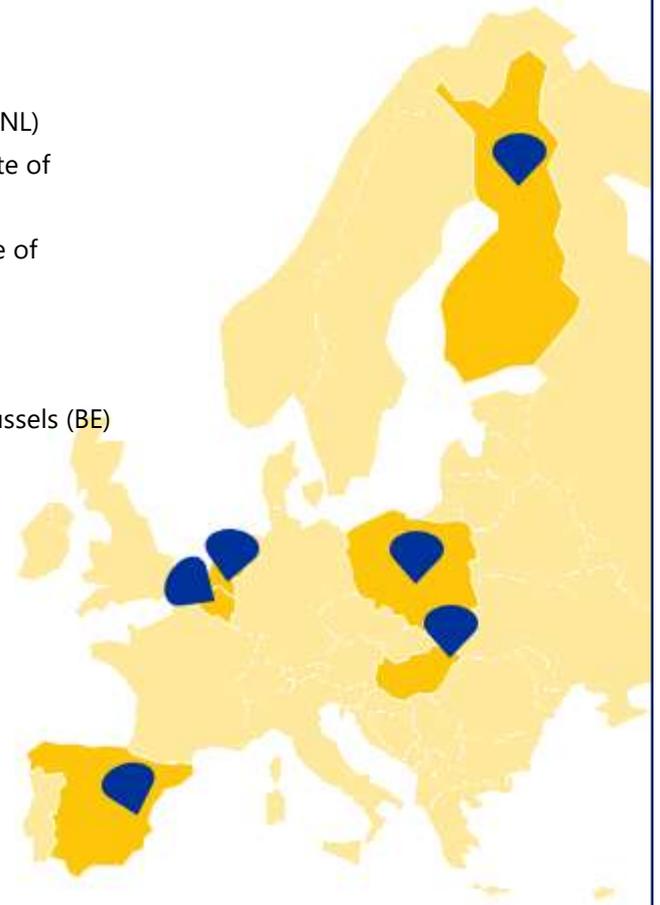
The Inno4Sports project brings together eight partners from six European regions that all share the ambition to promote the role of sport innovation in their regional economy. The aim of the project is to improve the performance and efficiency of regional development programmes (policy instruments) to make them better support innovation and business creation in the field of sport and vitality. This was done through interregional learning and knowledge exchange.

During the first phase of the project, from June 2018 to November 2020, the partners have shared good practices and learnt from each other through study visits, workshops and online communication. Based on interregional learning, each partner region has developed their own action plan where they determine how they will implement the lessons learnt in order to improve their regional development programmes.

You are now looking at the results of the first phase of the project. The second phase of the Inno4Sports project, December 2020 to November 2022, is dedicated to the implementation of the action plans. This document defines what has been learnt from partner regions during first phase of Inno4Sports and how these learnings are implemented in South Netherlands.

Project partners:

- Cluster Sports & Technology, South Netherlands (NL)
- Instituto de Biomecánica (IBV) & Valencian Institute of Business Competitiveness (IVACE), Valencia (ES)
- MSE Cluster Ltd & University of Debrecen Institute of Sport Sciences, Hajdú-Bihar (HU)
- Regional Council of Lapland, Lapland (FI)
- Verde Cluster, Łódź (PL)
- European Platform for Sport Innovation (EPSI), Brussels (BE)



Regional context

Related to ERDF-policies the Netherlands is divided into 4 regions that have their own Operational Program. These regions are:

1. North (provinces of Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe)
2. East (provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel)
3. West (provinces of Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland)
4. South (provinces of Zeeland, Noord-Brabant and Limburg)

The South Netherlands region consists of three provinces, which in itself have their own innovation policies and budgets, but have a combined RIS3 strategy that is connected to ERDF funding. This RIS3 strategy is renewed every 6 years and drives the Operational Program: OP South Netherlands. The funding of this program comes from 3 sources: the European ERDF funding, national funding from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy and funding from the provinces. The execution of this OP South Netherlands is carried out by the Stimulus office.

The province of Noord-Brabant is a highly innovative region that has won several awards for the high standards it represents with its innovative sector. The province is geographically well-positioned in Western Europe and is also the stronghold of Brainport Eindhoven, one of the 'smartest' regions of the world.

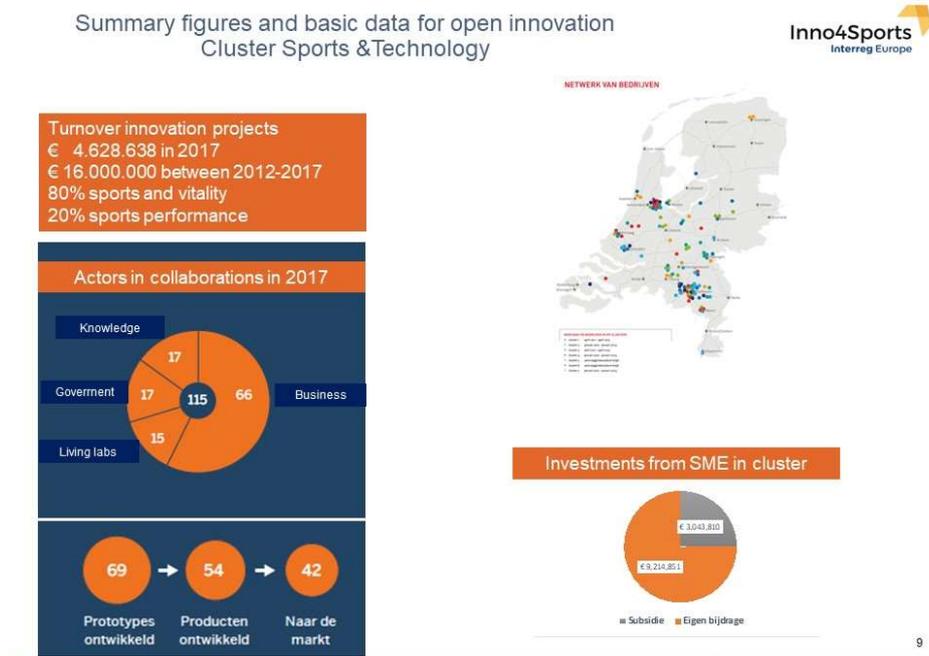
The province is a flagship region of the EU with regards to the promotion of clusterisation and technological innovation. This holds not only for its renowned industrial sectors, but also for sports and its interlinkages with design, technology and health, e.g. life sciences. The process of clusterisation, the formation and operation of regional innovation ecosystem that aim for the promotion of innovation has been explicitly supported by regional funding policies since 2004. Sports (a subject of clusterisation), however, is not a dedicated task of the province or a top economic sector. Therefore, it does not have a sustainable anchorage in regional policy, making its position relatively vulnerable. However, bringing innovation into sports and moving the field closer to the focus of economic and innovation policy is unavoidable. The most logical method for this is via the top sectors Health & Life Sciences and High-Tech systems.

Proposals for innovative projects on sports need to be formulated to fit into the policy framework and implementation strategy of Health, whereby the recognition of sports as a main inspiration source for technological innovation, design as well as a healthier and inclusive society calls for the necessary adjustments to be considered at policy level. However, currently the main reasons to invest in sports innovation are based on the economic opportunities it holds, e.g. lower health care costs, increase in market potentials of SMEs in the province, and are less explicitly focused on the overall promotion of healthy living for the population in the province.

Sport and vitality, in its different forms, is identified as a key driver for economic growth, innovation, and well-being at a European level. It is embedded with other sectors such as tourism, health, education and transport. It can help specific business sectors to develop, depending on the characteristics of sport demand and supply in a specific country. It is a key business development domain for many regions.

The vision is that instead of creating a better health-care system we create a better care for health system through the adoption of sport & physical activity related innovations into society. This not only creates a healthier & fitter society but also a large economic potential and secures private sector investment leverage.

In the South Netherlands region the Cluster Sports and Technology is an innovation cluster consisting of >100 companies, with a growing turnover in innovation projects (from 4,6 M€/year in 2017 to more than 5



M€/year in 2019) and with a growing number of successful launches of products in the market. The companies are most often small and medium size enterprises (SME's). They see sport and vitality as a chance for (new) business. Cluster Sports and Technology is one of the few officially labelled¹ clusters in South Netherlands (with a strong basis in the Brainport region) and besides of its large base of SMEs and other businesses, also consists of universities, field/living labs and local/regional governments from predominantly the province of Noord Brabant. The technological excellence of the region has a worldwide impact. Traditional the impact of the technological excellence for regional business development was underperforming. Innovation for sports and vitality at regional level is regarded as a cross over area in which technological excellence can be applied for innovation and business creation for sports and vitality @work, @public spaces, @sport. Projects to achieve this have been initiated and lead to investments in the area (for the year 2018 approx. 1,85 M€ was invested in projects like Nano4Sport, Vitality Living Lab).

In the recent past the Cluster Sports and Technology has played an important role in the development of the regional ecosystem in the field of innovation for sports and vitality. This was predominantly achieved by developing a broad portfolio of innovation projects. However, projects are time limited and as such the portfolio does not have a stable character. The regional ambition is to develop this ecosystem to the next level, with a more stable nucleus of collaboration partners and a more innovation program approach with a long term innovation agenda. This approach is called the **smart innovation hub for sports and vitality**. This is a coordinated and cooperative collaboration of core knowledge and innovation partners that serves as a one stop shop for clients in need of innovation support, such as SMEs, corporates and (local and regional) governments.

¹ Cluster Excellence Label: <https://www.cluster-analysis.org/cluster-management-excellence>

The hub is a local innovation ecosystem that include quadruple helix stakeholders (e.g. cluster partners, technology platform etc.). It will deliver innovation services to businesses and governments and support the maturation and transfer of excellent technologies and knowledge towards applications in society and industry. Importantly, the innovation hub will innovate with support of the facilities of living labs. These living labs are smart environments where people practice sports and physical activity and generate data and knowledge (through smart places, wearable, soft technology...) and where businesses can test and launch new services & products. Furthermore the ambition is to connect this hub at a European level through inter-regional cooperation.

The innovation hub builds upon the regional excellences and would entail selective investments in the regional infrastructure (living labs) which provides testing facilities and data (opportunity mapping), stimulates innovation and SME take up of services and technologies and scale up and attract investors.

3. Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Policy instrument addressed:

OP South Netherlands 2014 – 2020
RIS3 South Netherlands 2021 – 2027
OP South Netherlands 2021 - 2027

The policy context and the contribution to improve the policy instrument

The policy instrument

Through OP South Netherlands ERDF 2014 -2020, the South Netherlands region invested 114 M€ ERDF for the period 2014-2020. The OP promotes business investment in Research and Innovation and promotes the adoption of innovative low-carbon technologies in the region through demonstration and pilot projects. The RIS3 strategy of the region is clearly focusing on cross-overs between relevant top sectors. Sports and vitality is seen as an interesting cross over that provides interesting chances for new business.

The current RIS3 2014-2020, that is the basis of the running OP, states that the clue to smart specialisation is the clusters: In addition to the efforts to be made on existing clusters, the region's strategy is to further develop a number of new or emerging clusters and promote cross-overs between clusters. The areas with growth potential are those that deliver innovative solutions to societal challenges (including health care, and sustainability in general). Health, demography and welfare priority organically incorporates Sports as well.

The current OP ends after 2020. According to Stimulus, the office that manages the OP, the programs targets are almost fulfilled, with good expenditure (almost all means are invested in the program) and satisfactory outcome.



Figure 1 OP South Netherlands 2014 - 2020

The Province of Noord-Brabant coordinates the development of the new RIS3 2021-2027, with support of the provinces of Zeeland and Limburg. Stakeholders are consulted in the process, but the final RIS3 is defined by the regional authorities. The RIS3 guides the allocation of local ERDF funds and sets the targets of the new OP South Netherlands (2021-2027)

In the current OP South Netherlands program, we have achieved a successful tender for the Vitality Living Lab project (started in 2018) in which the OP has invested about 2,5 M€ (70% ERDF, 30% national funding) in the 4,9 M€ project. The project focusses on important aspect of the regional ecosystem (cross overs, involvement of SME, living lab approach and societal impact). In the evaluation of the current RIS3 (2014-2020) we and the Stakeholder Group representatives proactively showed the results of the running Vitality Living Lab project and of the lessons learned of the Inno4Sport project to highlight the option to strengthen the (societal and economic) impact of sports and vitality for the region. As such we were able to achieve policy changes in the current OP and influence the new RIS3 2021-2027 and hence also the OP South Netherlands 2021 – 2027 that is based on this new RIS3.

Since the current OP South Netherlands program is almost spent, we especially want to influence the new OP South Netherlands program (2021-2027). This new OP South Netherlands program focusses on innovation with economic return and social impact on five transitions: the energy, raw materials, climate, agriculture and food & health transitions. These are all global challenges that South Netherland also faces, and where the region can achieve breakthroughs thanks to its powerful innovation system. Cluster Sports and Technology mainly focuses on the food & health transition. Our innovation ecosystem mainly contributes to health challenges, not healthcare but care for health. In this way the objectives of the Action Plan match the objectives of the new OP South Netherlands program (2021-2027).

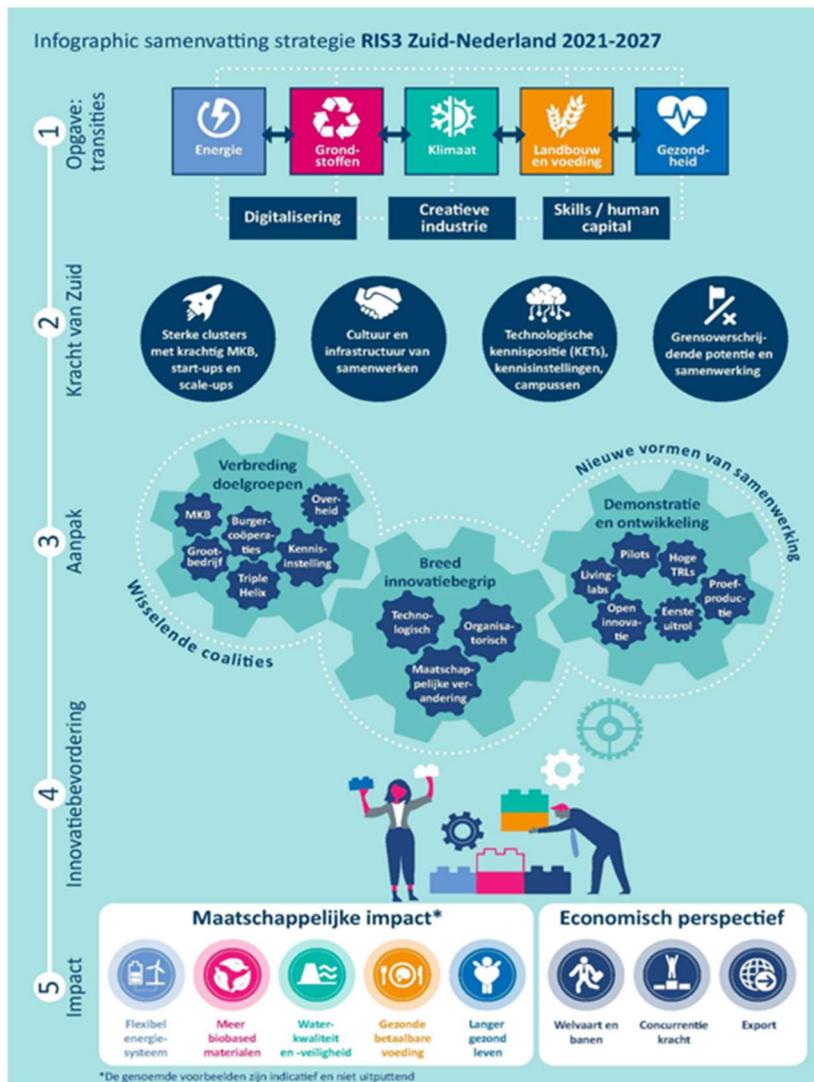


Figure 2 Policy directions of the new RIS3 strategy 2021-2027

The amount of projects related to innovation for Sports & Vitality is limited, but thanks to clusters actions, the running OP South Netherlands project Vitality Living Lab and the Inno4Sports project, the domain of sports and vitality is more and more considered as a domain of relevance. It is possible to get ERDF funding for innovation for Sports & Vitality as long as the projects meet the objectives of the OP.

There are no identified barriers in the functioning of the RIS3. Innovation for Sports & Vitality is not a separate item but has many linkages to the priorities of the RIS3 and the interlinkages between Sports & Vitality and other sectors create a lot of opportunities.

Innovation and business creation for Sports & Vitality provides excellent chances. The position of Sports & Vitality is traditionally strongly costs driven, providing societal impact. It is more and more clear that the domain Sports and Vitality represents also an area for innovation and business creation and therefore economic impact (not only for large companies but also for SMEs and start-ups). The need for the transition from healthcare to care for health offers an interesting area for the region based on the technology assets and organisational structure.

Cluster Sports and Technology is one of the few clusters operation in South Netherlands and has a mandate of the Province of Noord Brabant to act on its behalf on interregional innovation policies, like in the Industrial Modernisation domain. As such South Netherlands is co-initiator and co-leading region in the Sport thematic partnership under the S3 Platform for Industrial Modernisation (ClusSport) since 2017. S3P ClusSport

collaboration supports the role of sports in economic development activities and stimulates interregional collaboration through a pipeline of innovation projects. It connects 12 regions in Europe that have a special emphasis on innovation in sports and vitality in their RIS3. Together they have set up a strategy and are developing a portfolio of interregional collaboration projects, based on the combination of each other's excellences.

The voice of Cluster Sports and Technology is therefore relevant both in the development of the RIS3 2021-2027 as in the interregional policy developments within the Industrial Modernisation programmes.

The change

Already achieved changes

In the addressed OP South Netherlands we wish to increase the investment in innovation for Sport and Vitality, but especially for the new OP (2021-2027) since the current one (2014-2020) is almost spent. We have had discussions with the OP Managing Authority on influencing the current OP. It became very quickly apparent that there is no room anymore to influence the running OP (2014 – 2020) originally addressed by the Inno4Sports project since all financial means have been dedicated and no new projects/calls can be funded. However, we started to influence the policy instruments already before the formal start of the Inno4Sport project, based on the ideas and needs of our regional stakeholders by the realisation of a new OP funded project called Vitality Living Lab. Though the Vitality Living Lab project (2018-2022, 4,9 M€ turnover, 50% funded by ERDF and national funding) was approved just before the formal start of the Inno4Sports project, the realisation and outcomes of the project build on the lessons learnt of the Inno4Sports. The project focuses on reinforcing the economic structure on a major societal challenge (vitality). The Vitality Living Lab project is the first step towards the policy change we want to achieve in which we can incorporate already some of the lessons learned during the international learning from Inno4Sports project. We have so far assisted 25 SMEs in the Vitality Living Lab project, and we have been developing 35 projects within the Vitality Living Lab based on the lessons learned of Inno4Sports. Funding of these subprojects is partly realised from the Vitality Living Lab project budget, partly by own investments by public and private parties, partly by new regional, national or international funds. A secondary effect which we've already achieved by Vitality Living Lab is that the topic "sports and vitality" is now an accepted part of the deliverables of the current OP program and formulation of the OP South Netherlands program 2021-2027: meaning that the lessons learnt from the Vitality Living Lab and Inno4Sports provides us with a clearer evidence for the future content for the regional OP agenda for 2021-2027 as for the provincial agenda.

Planned changes

Within the new RIS3 2021-2027 one of the major topics is innovation for the societal challenge to have a healthy ageing population. The start of the Vitality Living Lab project can be seen as an important milestone and a first acknowledgement of the role of innovation for sports and vitality in the RIS3 strategy of the region South Netherlands. The deliverables and results achieved so far in the project demonstrate the possibility to create new value propositions, business cases and business with a clear impact of start-ups and SME's. It is now focused on the public space domain (Sports & Vitality @Public Spaces. We want to maximise the impact of the Vitality Living Lab project as a seed now towards a substantial volume of projects of Sport & Vitality innovation in the different domains (@public spaces: innovations in the public areas, @work: innovations in the occupational environment, @sports: innovations in the sports domain).

The RIS3 is revised and Sports & Vitality is embedded under innovation policies that impact the big societal challenges (i.e. employment, talent & health) in which Sports & Vitality is recognized as an instrument with

economic and societal positive effects. With good quality innovation projects on Sports & Vitality we build a strong regional ecosystem-like collaboration and linkages to other sectors.

As stated in the Inno4Sports application, we (including the stakeholders) want to initiate new bottom up and demand driven ERDF-projects that support the Sports & Vitality sector with a focus on SMEs support and creation of new business in the region.

To increase the amount of good quality projects we need to structure the existing collaborations in the ecosystem towards an innovation hub for sports and vitality in order to find synergies and shared objectives and to avoid overlapping activities. We want to develop the innovation hub for S&V for this purpose.

Number and volume of direct dedicated tenders and collaborations/projects

- Number of SMEs included in projects led by Cluster Sports & Technology and financed from the OP: **10**
- Projects developed with a cross-sectoral relevance, resulting from the project's learning process: **10**

4. Action 1. Influence current Operational Program South Netherlands (2014-2020)

Since the start of the Inno4Sport project we have used the parallel running OP South Netherlands project Vitality Living Lab as an example and starting point to further illustrate the need and chances for a further OP South Netherlands focus. In order to implement the lessons learned from the Inno4Sport project into the Vitality Living Lab project we have organised multiple stakeholders' meetings and synergy sessions. Not all the lessons learnt could be implemented in the Vitality Living Lab project but some of them, as reported below. Key consortium partners in the regular meetings of the Vitality Living Lab project were consulted for this. The current OP South Netherlands project Vitality Living Lab provides already impact (a clear involvement of SME's in the project, so far 25) which is one of the self-defined indicator of the Inno4Sports and is also a source for further influencing the current OP South Netherlands program:

1. lessons learnt and evidence that innovation and business creation in Sports and Vitality is actually possible
2. illustration that we want to go from incidents and projects towards structure and programs

We used the lessons learnt in the Inno4Sport project to sharpen the direction/deliverables of the OP South Netherlands project Vitality Living Lab. As such, 3 lessons learnt (LL) resulted in a modification (M) of specific activities in the Vitality Living Lab project. LL4 resulted in a proposal to include a new activity/aspect.

Good practises and lessons learnt from the Valencian region that were implemented into the Vitality Living Lab project

Valencian region	
Good Practise	Lesson learnt
Using activity groups as 'medicine' prescribed by health centres	Involve the health stakeholders in the topic of sports and vitality.

The labour force is the most easy addressed when implementing vitality policies, question is if they should be realised through private or public initiatives (presentation & workshop IE/KCS Valencia)	Develop a vitality approach not only with a focus on the public-private sector (@public spaces) but also with a direct focus on the private sector (@work)
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1. **Action Step 1** Based on LL1 from the Valencian region we explicitly incorporated partners from the health area such as organisations and private initiatives as It's my Life, Eindhoven Vitaal in the innovation (use) cases that were developed in the Vitality Living Lab project.
2. **Action Step 2.** The Vitality Living Lab project was primarily focused on public/private-partnerships in the contexts of cities and sport areas. As a result of LL2, we have incorporated innovations that stimulate the labour force. As a consequence, larger private companies are now being involved too in the Vitality Living Lab project.

Good practises and lessons learnt from the Lapland region that were implemented into the Vitality Living Lab project

Lapland region	
Good Practise	Lesson learnt
The experience of the public/private Arctic Sports Network	Involve a wider stakeholder network in further developing the goal of the Vitality Living Lab project.
The innovative approach of Lapland on service model development using both virtual and real lab environments to test new services and approaches on its usability,	Our product-service innovation need to have more attention

3. **Action Step 3.** We initiated with the public/private stakeholders (both within and outside of the Vitality Living Lab project) a joint vision and actions for the future collaboration structure. This resulted in a joint manifest of regional stakeholders, in which they commit to establish an innovation hub for sport and vitality. Elaboration of the innovation hub is part of this action plan.
4. **Action Step 4.** We have identified the service model development as a topic for further learning with Lapland to include in the innovation hub development and to further incorporate this in the Vitality Living Lab project.

These steps have already been taken during phase 1 and has led to a reported and validated policy change.

5. Action 2. Develop Innovation Hub for Sports & Vitality

The approach is to develop a regional innovation hub for Sports & Vitality. The innovation hub invests in the regional infrastructure (living labs) which generates testing facilities and data (opportunity mapping), stimulates innovation and SME take up of services and technologies and scale up and attract investors.

The innovation hub is a local innovation ecosystem that include quadruple helix stakeholders (e.g. clusters, technology platforms, etc). It offers services to SMEs and support the maturation and transfer of excellent technologies and knowledge towards applications in society and industry. Importantly, the innovation hub

innovates through a living lab approach. These are smart environments where people practice sports and physical activity and generate data and knowledge (through smart places, wearable, soft technology...) and where businesses can test and launch new services & products.

Until now social challenges have been identified as an important field (healthy ageing population) in the RIS3 policy, but this needs to be translated in tenders and project calls in the future OP South Netherlands. Existing instruments (calls) need to be improved to make them more supportive of Sports & Vitality activities, especially those aiming to develop innovative products and services with cross-sectorial relevance (tourism, health promotion and active aging).

Background

Good practice(s)

The Valencian approach, both from the Cluster 'Asociación para el Cuidado de la Calidad de Vida' (CVIDA) and the regional collaboration between public organisations and private organisations as well as the Lapland approach: the Network and the RIS3 policy, well embedded in the region are GP's that were an inspiration to us as to develop our action.

In Valencia the CVIDA Cluster, as a bottom up Quality of Life cluster, encompasses industry, health related organisations (insurance and providers like hospitals), research and universities, end-user (patient) organisations and local authorities, so all relevant stakeholders are present. They focus on quality of life of citizen and employees, but from a customer point of view, not a patient point of view. In that they develop public-private collaborations, to innovate, validate new approaches but also to create a roadmap for new developments.

Valencian region	
Good Practise	Lesson learnt
New approach of using activity groups as 'medicine' prescribed by health centres, leads to better physical condition of target groups (at least 50% of participants) (presentation IE/KCS Valencia)	Reach out to the regional health related NGO's
Local government approach on creating green sports & activity environment in the old river bed: long term government approach supported by the inhabitants and proven effect on use by the inhabitants (presentation & walkshop IE/KCS Valencia)	Develop a good relationship with the local governments for a long-term support and reach out to the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods involved
Integrated collaboration of 'health' & 'vitality' stakeholders (suppliers, users, government, science & innovation parties) in CVIDA; thru a bottom up approach and little overhead costs brings good added value for all stakeholders (presentation IE/KCS Valencia)	Develop a wide stakeholder base with bottom up involvement

This example is a lesson to be implemented in our innovation hub approach because of:

- the wide range of stakeholders
- the bottom up approach of it

- the consumer point of view related to health issues
- the good collaboration between public and private partners.

We would like to apply these lessons learnt in our innovation hub approach, i.e. operating the hub in a similar way as the CVIDA cluster works.

The Lapland approach: the Arctic Sport Network & the RIS3 policy related to it is also an inspiration for us. The Arctic Sports Network is a network supported by the regional government of Lapland in which all relevant stakeholders on the field of sport (sports associations, sports infrastructure operators, local councils, sports industry and sports related education and research) are gathered together and from which the development roadmap of the regional Council of Lapland is subsequently supported by the RIS3 policy and the investment means associated with.

Lapland region	
Good Practise	Lesson learnt
The Arctic Sports Network: a quadruple helix representation of the important stakeholders of the bottom up network in Lapland on sports and vitality (government and local communities, sports (and related) organisations, knowledge organisations, businesses): a next generation cluster representation of the region (an also cross regional), i.e. not only the private but also the public sectors very well represented (presentation IE/KCS Lapland)	Develop a wide stakeholder base with bottom up involvement from the different private and public arena's with also frequent consultation, supported by the regional government.
The clear RIS3 strategy of the region, with focus on key areas and linked to the regional networks and ambitions; the way it is translated into clear actions to find EU funding support, and the way it is backed by the municipalities of the region (presentations IE/KCS Lapland)	Link the RIS3 strategy of the region to both regional, national and international policies and funding and develop an investment plan accordingly
The innovative approach on the service model development, with also the testing facilities of that (Uni of Lapland) (presentation IE/KCS Lapland)	Do not focus only on product innovation, but also on product-service innovation and even stand-alone service innovation
Sustainability as a logical key element in all development strategies (presentation & walkshop IE/KCS Lapland)	Implement sustainability (green-deal) into all innovation strategies

This example is also a lesson to be implemented in our innovation hub approach because of:

- the wide range of stakeholders
- the good collaboration between public and private partners
- the funding mix that is developed in the region (regional, national and European funding programs) used in the development roadmap and the RIS3 policy (and its means) of the regional government.

We will take efforts to strengthen the operation of the hub by financing the hub from different public and private sources (funding mix).

Both environments in Valencia region and in Lapland show that structured innovation ecosystems around sports & vitality (living labs, and smart active spaces, neighbourhoods & cities and occupational environments) can play an important future role in improving healthy active lifestyles of people and also creating social and economic added value. As such the elements of the Good Practises of both regions (Valencia and Lapland) have been incorporated into the Action Plan of South Netherlands as can be seen also in figure 3.

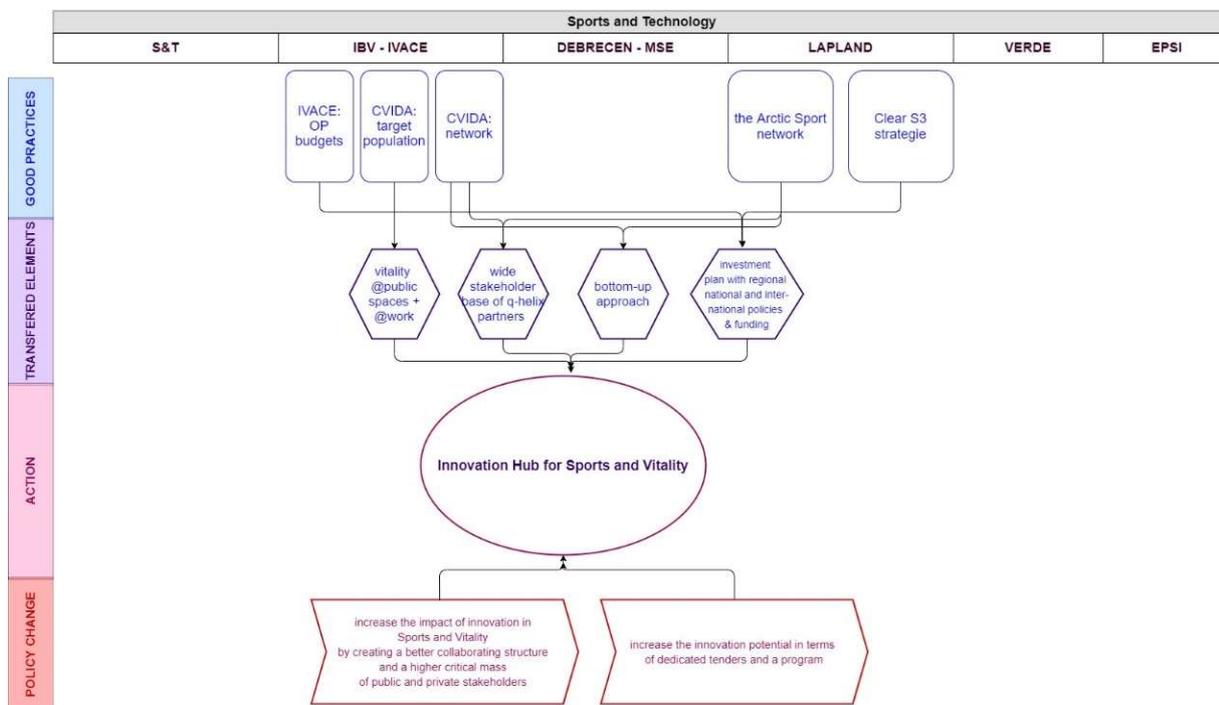


Figure 3 Good practises and the incorporation of its elements into the action plan

Action steps and activities

From the lessons learnt from the 2 regions we will transform the current organisation of Cluster Sport and Technology by expanding our regional stakeholder group to create a wider network of stakeholders. This network will function as an advisory body to advise on the strategy of the Innovation Hub (see CVIDA and Arctic Sport Network). In this we intend to include the Managing Authorities into the advisory body as much as possible. With this we intend to position the new Innovation Hub as much as possible into the new RIS3 (as Lapland did include hubs in their RIS3) and its subsequent funding possibilities (as the CVDIA cluster of Valencia is funded by the OP).

Also the Valencian experience in influencing OP budgets for pilots on cross sectorial health-sport exercise experiments & the Lapland experience in influencing OP budgets into an investment program to create an economic impact of sports inspire us to interact with our regional authorities to create a funding package to increase the innovation potential by dedicated cross sectorial tenders and projects.

1. **Action Step 1** Set up a new structure: an innovation hub for Sports & Vitality as a collaborative initiative between key partners (Cluster Sports and Technology + knowledge parties: Eindhoven University of Technology, Fontys University of Applied sciences, Holst Centre)

Sub-actions

1.1. Set up the base coordination structure of the innovation hub

Develop a basic coordination setup of the innovation hub, supported by the key stakeholders of the innovation hub: setting up the management structure, setting up the advisory body, setting up the coordination body and rules, etc.

Timeline: Q1/2021

Resources: 15.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

1.2. Set up the organisational structure

Develop the legal entity under which the partners of the innovation hub can collaborate, and fund the coordination activities (hub management, innovation program management, legal, communication, marketing). Set up the collaboration contracts between the hub and the partners.

Timeline: Q2/2021

Resources: 15.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

1.3. Set up the data infrastructure for the collaboration

Carrying out a pilot action to find out how the good practise 'Data driven innovation in sports' can be applied in other regions (Valencia, Lapland) and can improve the data management infrastructure in South Netherlands as a key element of the operation of the innovation hub. The use of data in the various innovation process steps is a key element in the functioning of the innovation hub and is therefore an important step in the development of the innovation hub.

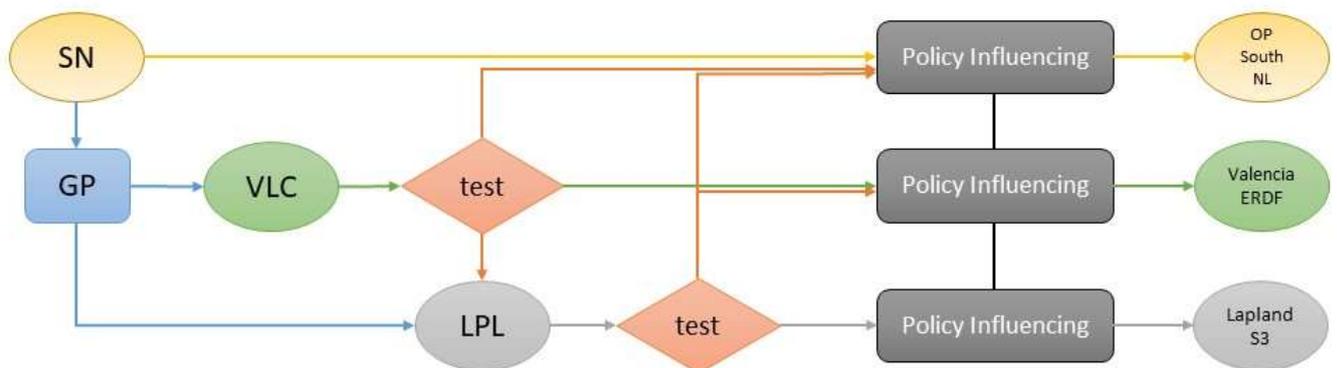


Figure 4 The pilot action: how the Good Practise (GP) of South Netherlands (SN) will be tested by the Valencian region (VLC) and Lapland (LPL) and how it will lead to policy influencing

The pilot consists of the following steps:

- 1) Interregional workshop about data driven innovation in sports
- 2) Elaboration of needs and opportunities for data driven innovation process in regional context
- 3) Development of a model for the data driven innovation process in regional context
- 4) Case application of data driven innovation
- 5) Interregional webinar on assessment and conclusions

Timeline: Q1/2021-Q2/2022

Resources: Data driven innovation pilot action, 79.910 €, funded by Interreg Europe, under evaluation

1.4. *Acquire the necessary funding from the public and private partners to install the organisational structure*

In order to start operating the structure, key staff needs to be placed into position. Partly this will be done through in-kind outsourcing from the key stakeholders, partly by contracting externals.

Timeline: Q2/2021

Resources: 50.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

2. **Action Step 2** Increase the innovation potential in terms of dedicated tenders and a program in the field of Sports and Vitality as a contribution to the societal challenge of a healthy and vital ageing society with economic impact. This will be done through the development of a project/projects to be submitted in the new OP South Netherlands 2021-2027.

Sub-actions

2.1. *Explore the public and private support possibilities for setting up long term programs.*

Assess the funding/investment opportunities to finance the key services of the innovation hub:

- the market need & data support system
- the innovation support (SMEs & corporates)
- the validation support
- the acceleration support
- the scale-up support.

To set up these functions public/private funding is needed from regional, national, but also international sources. A funding mix proposition has to be made.

Timeline: Q1/2021

Resources: 15.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

2.2. *Submit a project to develop the innovation services of the innovation hub*

After the assessment, a proposal needs to be submitted to acquire funding (ERDF) to set up the innovation services, in particular the data driven aspects of it.

Timeline: Q2/2021

Resources: 15.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

2.3. *Increase the innovation potential by dedicated cross sectorial tenders and projects*

Also based on the assessment new projects and programs need to be proposed for additional funding from different public/private sources, e.g. from international Cluster Support programs, but also from third party funding (European Investment Bank, Venture Capitalists, ..). This creates the needed funding mix of the different instruments of the innovation hub.

Timeline: Q4/2021

Resources: 30.000 €, funded by key stakeholders of the innovation hub

Goals of the action

The broad goal of our action is to increase the impact in the field of innovation in Sports & Vitality by creating a better collaborating structure, an innovation program and a critical mass of public and private stakeholders on top of the existing cluster and thus contributing to an important area in the new RIS3: the societal challenge of a healthy and vital ageing society

Building from a bottom up approach a strong commitment has developed among a wide group of stakeholders from the Q-helix to further develop the regional sport and vitality innovation ecosystem.

Stakeholders have defined early 2019 a Manifest on the development of the innovation-ecosystem for Sports & Vitality. The main drivers are: from excellences and research driven projects to structure and user driven programs. This manifest is the basis for the further elaboration and setting of the future RIS3 agenda of the region and influencing the policy instruments. Links are made towards the Management Authority and OP South Netherlands program.

Specifically, we want to:

- Set up a new structure: an innovation hub for Sports & Vitality as a collaborative initiative between key partners (cluster + knowledge parties)
- Increase the innovation potential in terms of dedicated tenders and a program in the field of Sports and Vitality as a contribution to the societal challenge of a healthy and vital ageing society with economic impact

The outcome will be measured by the development of the collaboration structure and the number and volume of direct dedicated tenders and collaborations/projects:

- Number of SMEs included in projects led by Cluster Sports and Technology and financed from the OP: **10**
- Projects developed with a cross-sectoral relevance, resulting from the project's learning process: **10**

Policy Change

Action 1: The policy change that has been achieved in the current OP South Netherlands is a Type 1 and 3 improvement.

Through the change in the running Vitality Living Lab project and additional discussions with the managing authorities we were able to influence elements in the definition of the RIS3 that was developed in the course of 2019-2020 by South Netherlands. This in itself has impact of the definition of the new OP South Netherlands, which is currently in process. By this we hope to create easier access to new funding opportunities in the new OP, in particular for our Action 2

Action 2: The policy change is focused on a Type 1 improvement: implementing of project.

The action will support by implementing a pilot project to support the development of the strong local Sports & Vitality ecosystem that supports innovation and growth. The action also will support quadruple helix collaboration: educational organisations providing expertise and research, local/regional governments providing public services and supporting growth of local business, SME's developing their products and residents and sport clubs as end-users.

The action will support the implementation of RIS3 and specialisation in field of Sports & Vitality, but also in the field of data, Artificial Intelligence and smart technology.