

DATAR – CDC - OCDE

***Identification of experiences for the Exchange Fair of the
World Congress on Territorial Development***

**Grid of presentation of the projects,
to be sent by e-mail or post to :**

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Name of the experience	RIS + INNORED
Theme	Creation of a regional network of innovation support organisations
Concerned territory	
Project holder	
	Castilla y León (Spain)
	Agencia de Desarrollo de Castilla y León

Brief presentation of the experience

(initial objectives, process, first results...)

Objectives:

- To carry out a set of actions to promote innovation demand in Castilla y León.
- To design and implement a Network of Innovation Support Intermediate Organisations

The experience was structured in the following phases:

- Definition of the network and design of the animation organism.
- Consensus about the model
- Selection and justification of the pilot area and sectors: very first raising awareness actions and feasibility studies
- Definition of the pilot projects and consensus about their organisation
- Implementation of the pilot projects

Qualitative results of the experience:

- Promotion of innovative activity at companies where the majority of businesses belong to traditional sectors and are particularly reticent to introduce changes. Concretely, informal partnerships have arisen in the following sectors:
 - transformation of ornamental stone
 - production of agricultural machinery and machinery for the agrofood sector.
- Establishment of a new dynamic of effective collaboration between intermediary bodies, leading to a more integrated image of R&D and innovation support actions taken in the region.
- Opportunity for intermediary bodies to explain and promote their services to companies that are geographically remote and in many cases are ignorant of the region's technology and innovation offer.
- Creation of INTENEC Consortium comprising the 6 leading regional technology centres

Identification of the experience holder

Organisation responsible for the experience steering :

- ◆ *Name: Agencia de Desarrollo Económico*
- ◆ *Legal status: Regional Government of Castilla y León (Spain).*

Contact person(s) for additional information :

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Initial diagnostic

◆ *Factors which have contributed to the launching of the experience*

- The concentration of innovation activities in some areas (Valladolid, Burgos)
- The length of territory and the existence of industries separated from the economic and entrepreneurial activity.
- The differences in needs of information and innovation support due to the different types of business cultures.
- The inexistence of support services in the isolated areas
- Difficulties faced by the intermediate organisations to widen their scope of activities: distance and socio-cultural diversity.
- Funding in the framework of EU RIS + initiative.

◆ *Main actors at the origin of the experience*

The Regional Development Agency of Castilla y León (ADE), particularly its Division of Innovation that detected the need of setting up a network which co-ordinates the group of intermediate organisations so that they can collaborate in the Innovation Policy diffusion, gather efforts and generate synergies among them and avoid the efforts dispersion

Strategy

◆ *Selected objectives*

- To promote innovative activity at companies located in areas where innovation processes are less extended
- to study the viability of setting up a regional network of innovation support organisations in order to raise innovation awareness and thus innovation demand in the most unfavourable areas of the region,
- to set up the network,
- to identify both the main needs, in terms of innovation, of the firms located in these areas and the most suitable instruments, that is, concrete pilot projects to promote innovation in these firms, and
- to cluster firms with common interests..

◆ *Aimed territory and/or population*

ADE's officers, consultants as well as intermediary organisations that were previously interviewed carried out a very first selection and justification of the Pilot area and the Pilot sectors.

- Area: provinces of Avila, Zamora and Salamanca where the number of innovation projects was very low.
- Sectors: transformation of ornamental stone and production of agricultural machinery and machinery for the agrofood sector.

◆ *Schedule*

01/06/1999 - 30/06/01

Methodology and project managing

(process, method, specific tools implemented, human resources raised...)

Officers of ADE in co-ordination with the consultants accomplished the first definition of the Network Model. At the same time, intermediate organisations were interviewed in order to engage them into the project, to discuss the possibility of setting up the network (and introduce variations into the model), and to improve knowledge about socio-economic situation of the concrete areas covered by the intermediary organisations.

The network model proposed the creation of a Co-ordination Committee, which is integrated by some intermediary organisations and is driven by the Head of the Innovation and Technology Department of the RDA of Castilla y León (ADE). For the concrete tasks of animation and sensitisation of the network, the Co-ordination Committee foresaw the creation of a Technical Secretariat.

Taking into account the number of intermediary organisations and the fact that a pilot experience was foreseen, a Pilot Co-ordination Committee was set up in order to check the network performance on the field, concretely, within the framework of the Pilot area.

Pilot Co-ordination Committee working meetings were very useful tools to encourage co-operation among intermediary organisations involved and to organise pilot actions in the sectors selected:

- Presentation of the technology and innovation offer and articulation of task force.
- Diagnoses and innovation plans
- Individual assessment on information technologies

Pilot projects implementation was realised creating partnerships between the members of the network, that is, enterprises, technology centres, researchers from university, consultants, entrepreneurial associations, chambers of commerce, industrial liaison offices, local agents, ...

Realisations up to date

◆ *Actions completed up to date*

Pilot network has been set up, thus is, intermediary support organisations were clustered to generate synergies and to extend their activities over the pilot area.

Up to date, the following pilot actions have been realised:

- Detailed technology diagnoses and Innovation Plans to firms of the two selected sectors
- Technology and innovation offer presentation forums and encounters..
- Organisation of task forces with representatives of the firms and of the intermediate organisations
 - Materials, particularly oriented towards construction, property and heritage companies.
 - Prototypes and robotics. Technologies of production and organisation and Information Society tools.
 - Application of laser technology
- Seminar to show companies the possibilities offered by foreign trade actions to firms working in production of agricultural machinery and machinery for the agrofood sector
- Workshops for company executives and/or managers.
 - Marketing
 - Exportation consortiums for enterprises of production of agricultural machinery
 - Innovation in the sector of transformation of ornamental stone
- Personalised assessment on information technologies to firms of the two selected sectors
- Interactive portal for INNORED.

◆ *Period between the idea and the implementation*

Between the final definition of the network model and the implementation of the pilot actions 11 months passed.

◆ *Financial amounts for the experience and detail of the financial resources spent (private, public...)*

500,000 €

- 250,000 € from the European Commission
- 250,000 € co-funding of Castilla y León Region

Results up to date

◆ *Which are the beneficiaries touched?*

Main beneficiaries have been:

- Many of the businesses located in the pilot area, firms which belong to traditional sectors.
- Intermediate organisations involved in the pilot experience which have encountered the possibility of explaining and promoting their services to companies that are geographically remote and in most cases are ignorant of the region's technology and innovation offer
- The 6 leading regional technology centres which have constituted INTENEC consortium

◆ *Is the "experience" seen as a success?*

The experience has been seen as a success to the extent that

- Informal partnerships have arisen between companies belonging to traditional sectors and which do not generally like to make changes in management or organisation
- intermediary bodies have had the opportunity for extending their services outside the common circles and a new dynamic of effective collaboration between intermediary bodies has been established, leading to a more integrated image of R&D and innovation support actions taken in the region

◆ *Main strong points of the process?*

- Bottom-up orientation, by means of individualised in-house assessment and advisory actions, the organisation of seminars and demonstrations on specific needs and issues raised by the companies themselves in questionnaires, telephone interviews and business diagnoses.
- Working in collaboration with expert bodies in each specific area, co-ordinating bodies have designed the work methodology (schedule, contents, etc.) deemed most suitable for the companies concerned.

◆ *Obstacles encountered in the implementation of the experience?*

- The distance which has incremented the cost faced by intermediary organisations.
- Culture and habits:
 - individualism can constraints relationships among firms and between these ones and intermediaries
 - divergent preferences regarding timing can make a mess of a workshop.

Transferability

◆ *Degree of exemplarity for the Exchange Fair ?*

Traditionally, habits and routines have hindered the introduction of managerial or/and organisational changes in firms located in isolated areas, and besides, lack of confidence has contribute to reinforce their individualism and reticence to innovate.

This experience is a good example for the Exchange Fair since it has contributed to generate trust on the intermediate organisations and as a consequence of this, has made possible the appearance of innovative and co-operative processes.

◆ *Necessary conditions for the transfer to succeed ?*

- Commitment of the public sector
- Engagement of intermediate organisations so that they can play a leading role in the co-operation stimulation processes:
 - Creating a trust atmosphere
 - Detecting common interests and/or needs in the entrepreneurial fabric and promoting the articulation of informal contacts (clubs, forums, ...) which can give place to the appearance of alliances between firms.

◆ *Project holder capacity to encounter an exchange process?*

General opinion of the expert on the interest of such an experience for the Exchange Fair

- ◆ *Opinion on the selected theme (clusters; recomposing territories; relations between industrial development- and the environment)*

The experience has provided a good opportunity for regional support organisations to extend their services to firms located in areas where innovation and co-operation culture is less extended.

Pilot actions carried out have encouraged the establishment of co-operative processes among firms with common interests and between intermediate organisations and firms in field as diverse as production and fabrication technologies, laser technology application, exportation consortiums, etc..

- ◆ *Name of the expert*

Jaime del Castillo