

FROM PLANS TO CONCRETE ACTIONS WITHIN THE BRIDGES PROJECT

The two-day meeting of Interreg Europe project “Bridges” took place in Helsinki, Finland, on 11th – 12th September. Among the most important topics discussed by project partners were the regional action plans. Based on the results of the meeting, the action plans may be finalised and endorsed, and taken into action. There was also a visitor from European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC), Dr. Marina Ranga, who spoke about the challenges and possibilities of Smart Specialisation and commented on the regional plans presented at the meeting.

Bridges project includes nine partners from seven countries around Europe, who gathered to the premises of Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council in Helsinki for two days on 11th –12th September 2018. The Bridges project concentrates on developing bio economy on the partner regions, the focus and the goals defined individually for each of the regions. The joint objective is to enforce the cooperation between research and business and the impacts of each of the regions’ Smart Specialisation (RIS3) strategies. The connection between the RIS3 strategies of the partner regions is that bio economy is included in each of them from regional point of view.

Regional specifications of goals and emphasis to be added here!

Bridges project was launched in April 2016 and the implementation of the project is halfway at this point. The regional action plans have been drafted and at the meeting in Helsinki those went through a peer review, resulting with valuable tips for amendments and successful implementation. The action plans shall be finalised and endorsed by the end of the year and their implementation shall start in the beginning of year 2019. The project will end during spring 2021.



Bridges partners discussing the future implementation of regional action plans.

Regional Action Plans to be described here

Add description..

Smart Specialisation Supporting Regional Development

Smart Specialisation (RIS3) in practice deals with regional, place-based innovation strategies aiming for economic development, based on the broader [Cohesion Policy of the European Commission](#). Each region shall identify their strategic areas for intervention, in other words, where efforts and investments should be focused on. This is done based both on the analysis of the strengths and potential with wide stakeholder involvement, in a so called Quadruple Helix cooperation between research/ education, industries, the public sector and the civil society. This approach is a central part of the cohesion policy.

Dr. Marina Ranga from European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) participated the meeting and spoke about RIS3. She emphasised that implementing a RIS3 strategy will reveal any weaknesses of the regional innovation activities. At the moment Dr. Ranga works for the project "[RIS3 Support to Lagging Regions](#)", supporting RIS3 implementation in selected low-growth and less developed regions in EU member states. Typically these are located in countries with a highly centralised administration. A conclusion may be drawn, that reinforcing regional development resources and possibilities will boost the sustainable growth of economy.

The Helsinki-Uusimaa region, offering the premises for the Bridges project meeting, was actually the first region in Finland drafting their own Smart Specialisation strategy. Research Manager Ari Lainevuori is excited about the possibilities Smart Specialisation offers for regional development within the European Union. A concentration of research and innovation like the Uusimaa region may offer their expertise for other regions and at the same time utilise the expertise of these regions, together implementing the RIS3 model.

[Regional specifications about RIS3 implementation here!](#)

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