



THINKING SMART

Toolkit for the engagement of HEI in regional growth

University of Lodz (ULODZ)

The Entrepreneurial Discovery in HEIs

2017, May



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1. University of Lodz (ULODZ)

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This report is an output of the ERASMUS+ Thinking Smart project and presents the results of WP3 - Entrepreneurial Discovery in HEIs for each partner university. The entrepreneurial discovery process aimed to achieve a higher level of understanding on how the alignment of HEIs with regard to the regional development needs and priorities (considering its potential) can be promoted. As well, it aimed to support strategic and operational change in HEIs through a process based on cooperation and engagement, thus being essential for the involvement of stakeholders.

1.1. Introduction

The report for University of Lodz is written on the basis of 2 workshops organised within the WP3 of the Thinking Smart project and also on the basis of the survey research realised among the key University staff members. The 2 organised workshops were attended by representatives of business, local government, scientific institutes and universities. The first meeting was organised on 14th November 2016 and the second one on 6th February 2017. The people interviewed during the survey research, carried out in May 2017, were working as directors or vice-directors of the respective organisational units at the University (Institutes or Departments).

1.2. Overview of the Regional RIS3

Dynamically developing economy of Lodzkie Region needs modern management adjusted to the changing conditions, based on knowledge and innovation. This direction was adapted in recent years, resulting in passing

Regional Strategy of Innovation LORIS 2030. Then, the foundations for optimal application of endogenic potential were laid in order to ensure diffusion and absorption of innovation. This document indicates 6 Regional Intelligent Specialisations: modern textiles and fashion industry (including design); advanced building materials; medicine, pharmacy, cosmetics; power engineering, including renewable energy sources; innovative agriculture and food processing; IT and ICT as well as four key technological fields with highest ability to support economic growth. Their separation allowed to indicate the fields of cooperation of enterprises with scientific units, institutions in business environment and administration authorities, without which the success in the scope of innovation development is practically impossible in present market conditions.

The continuation of works on the development of the concept adapted in Regional Strategy of Innovation was the performance of the project titled “Development of Sector Policies for Lodzkie Region“ by the Marshal Office of Lodzkie Region. It enabled to create six strategic Documents that include the vision and aims of each key industry, functioning as a Regional Intelligent Specialisation. When developing them, all innovative methods of creating economy management strategies were employed. In particular, those based on cooperation and partnership of entities operating in the regional market, which made Lodzkie Region a national pioneer in this respect.

The assumptions accompanying the performance of the Project that are the result of long-term experiences showed the need of new attempt to the idea of what the cooperation between public administration, science and entrepreneurs should look like. Modern sector strategies should most of all be based on the concept and principle of partnership between these groups. Performing the Project, the principles of “**entrepreneurial discovery**” were used, in the scope of which, with the cooperation of representatives of the enterprises, science and

administration, challenges on the way to industry development and needs to be met were identified. Involvement of the stakeholders from the industry and science resulted in the creation of the vision, aims and Action Plan - a catalogue of actions which should be taken and performed with the aim to enhance the sector and, in consequence, contribute to the economic development of Lodzkie Region.

1.3. The role of the HEI in RIS3 design and implementation.

This part of the report is written mainly on the basis of the responses received from the directors of respective organisational units at the University of Lodz (Institutes/Departments).

The University of Lodz was engaged in the creation of the Development Strategy of the Lodz Region both at the level of the vice-rectors, scientific-research employees (mainly those from the Faculty of Economics and Sociology, The Faculty of Biology and Environment Protection, the Faculty of International and Political Studies, Faculty of Chemistry and the Faculty of Management). The director of the Technology Transfer Centre also took part in the works. This engagement was connected with performing research works and expert reports for the local government authorities in the frame of intelligent specialisation and also with taking part in the discussions of the team that developed the update of the Strategy for the years 2014-2020.

It has to be stressed, however, that even if the University was strongly involved in creation of the RIS3 strategy, it does not have, yet, a developed strategy for a general organisation and development for all the Faculties that would be aligned with it. One of the main reasons for that is the change of legislation that will be implemented for the whole higher education sector in Poland in the near future

(the changes will be announced in September 2017) and also the fact that last year there was a change of authorities of the University (rector's election which was followed by the change of all the vice-rectors).

1.4. Gaps, barriers, challenges

Cooperation between science and business

During the meetings organized within WP3 with representatives of business, local government, scientific institutes and universities, there appeared many problems of entrepreneurs concerning science and business cooperation. These problems in turn generate needs that also occur at the regional level, which means that they are equally dependent on the actions taken by the local government and the university. The main needs for cooperation between science and business include:

- There is a need to create an effective mechanism for mediation between science and business - due to the difficulties in cooperation at the interface between science and business and the strong attitude of the region to the development of R & D. There is a need to create instruments for cooperation between scientific institutions and economic entities. Encourage the process of creating business offers, support networking, and coordinate co-operation. It would be crucial to ensure the sustainability of cooperation;
- As part of strengthening existing and creating new links between science and business, it is necessary to organize special moderated meetings (working groups). The key to doing so would be to enable, through common tasks and networking, co-operation;

- There is a need to extend the offer for business by research institutes due to the relatively small commercial and practical effect currently arising from the research carried out;
- Need for closer cooperation and greater opportunities between colleges and universities in internships and internships;
- Due to the very low awareness of mutual offers, the Lodzkie Region has a strong need to increase this awareness. This area is not only for universities and businesses, but also for public administrations, R & D institutions and innovation centers;
- There is a need to increase the competitiveness of the offer of the world of science from the Lodzkie Region to other voivodships.

Entrepreneurs declare that a common problem at the interface between science and business is the lack of agreements on commercialization issues. The most common cause of this problem is the small amount of practical knowledge and experience on both the science and business side.

Education

One of the areas most often addressed by entrepreneurs in areas where needs are located is education. It is from its matching to the market depends on meeting the

needs of human resources of entrepreneurs, and thus appropriate preparation of young people for the labor market. The most important educational needs are:

- The need to adapt education to the needs of entrepreneurs - this applies in particular to closer cooperation between employers and educational actors, and thus better matching education to employment.

In the area of education, priority groups for which there is a need to intensify the qualification efforts are:

- Young people - Due to the high demand of key industries, highly specialized staff, it is worthwhile to undertake activities that will enable such educational units to be able to educate them in a manner adequate to the market demand of key industries;
- People aged 50+ - adapt the educational offer to late-stage people in order to facilitate their retraining in different industries and to stay on the labor market;

Problems of entrepreneurs in the Lodzkie Region (Science - business relationship)

The unused potential of business cooperation with science creates a real barrier to the innovation and socio-economic development of the regions. Entrepreneurs from Lodz paid special attention to the following issues related to insufficient R & D cooperation:

- Poorly developed instruments for the protection of intellectual property in the company-university relationship. There are no clear rules for granting patents to the entities that are responsible for their implementation;
- The lack of an appropriate evaluation system for research institutes that would take into account the degree of industrial research and the volume of commercialization in the award process.

Commercialization of research and technology transfer

Commercial use of research and development is one of the key challenges facing the European Commission to the Member States, and technology transfer is now a key element in the development of entrepreneurship. Both areas are closely linked to innovation. In the conducted in-depth interviews and workshops, the following problems related to the above-mentioned effects of R & D works were identified:

Transfer and commercialization of technology:

- A small number of research enterprise offers as well as modest knowledge of mutual offer and needs among companies, public administrations, R & D institutions and innovation centers;
- The unwillingness to change and the bureaucracy of universities and other R & D entities. The low flexibility of scientific institutions results in the transfer of cooperation between enterprises from the Lodzkie Region to other voivodships and universities located outside the region or abroad;

- There is insufficient confidence and understanding in the relationship between science and business, resulting in insufficient willingness to cooperate in the sphere of science and research and the economic sphere. The decisive factor for such a situation seems to be the variability of the objectives of the activity, which results in a completely different approach to their effect;
- Deficit of persons specializing in the whole process of commercialization of technology;
- The lack of a mechanism for linking business and science, including the lack of a supervisory body and coordinating the relationship between R & D, negatively affecting the current cooperative relationship. The emergence of such a link would avoid the risk of mental and organizational barriers.

Others:

- Unmatched vocational education to market needs, which is the consequence of, among other things, the inadequacy of curricula for changing economic realities (few practical activities, lack of current knowledge on business and technological processes);
- The limited absorption of the local market on innovative products results in a narrowing of the transfer market. Funding for innovative product research does not entail a choice when it comes to public procurement; it primarily focuses on proven solutions;

- Lack of strong mechanisms to build space for business collaboration with science. The surveyed entrepreneurs indicated that they lack the opportunity to establish contacts and maintain positive relationships for the exchange of information and mutual support in the professional field.
- The lack of cooperation between entrepreneurs and research centers in the region has the effect of undermining the potential for large projects, thus undermining the region's specializations against the background of the country. This situation also translates into a low level of interregional or international projects;
- Dependence on one source of funding (EU funds) may prove to be a significant threat when building sustainable development of innovation centers and result in significant changes in the structure and profile of innovation centers.

1.5. Identified opportunities for further/future involvement of the HEI

The opportunities for future involvement of the University of Lodz in the regional smart specialisation strategy result mainly from the gaps, barriers and challenges described in the previous section of the report, where more comprehensive description is presented:

- Increase the technology transfer from the HEIs of the lodzkie region (not only the University of Lodz, but also the Lodz University of Technology and the Medical University) into the regional/national market. This could be done, inter alia, by commercialisation of the research results from different projects,

but also by closer cooperation between universities, research institutes, companies and local government;

- Improve the cooperation between the University and regional authorities. This could be done for example by organisation of seminars connected with the needs of the region for the university members or by including people from the universities in different advisory bodies of the local government;
- Improve collaboration of the HEIs with the companies in terms of both, the research and commercialisation of the research results;
- Create effective mechanisms for the above mentioned cooperation and collaboration;
- Increase flexibility of the HEIs, which would result in better and faster possibility to answer the needs of the region, however this is hard to achieve at the University level. More deep and structural changes are needed at the national level. This would also help in creating new studies that would be aligned with the real needs of the market, and possibly with the areas of intelligent specialisations of the regions;
- Create the strategy of the University that would be aligned with the regional smart specialisations, and that would ensure that they are taken into consideration at all levels of the HEI – from Departments, through Faculties to the Rector’s office;
- Increase the cooperation between different HEIs in the region in order to e.g. perform joint research projects and utilise the expertise of all the partners to create common studies. One of such studies is already implemented – it is called Revitalisation and it is done in cooperation by the University of Lodz and Lodz University of Technology. It is not strictly connected with smart specialisation, but it is dealing with an issue that is very important for the lodzkie region, as it is being revitalised after the fall of the textile industry that happened in the 1990s;

1.6. Future Implementation of the RIS3

It would be good to create an internet portal or platform for both regional stakeholders (local government, HEIs, businesses) and citizens that would be responsible for distributing the knowledge on smart specialisation among them, but also that would collect information from them on initiatives, ideas and actions that would help in the development of the region and its S3 strategy. Such portal could also be used for communication between the stakeholders in order to plan future joint projects and other forms of cooperation.

Paid internships could be created by the companies in cooperation with the local authorities, especially in the areas covered by the S3 strategy, which would attract the students to choose those fields of studies and in turn contribute to their development.

The vocational education should be adjusted to match the market needs, which would result in better alignment of the education with the changing economic realities (especially young people would learn practical activities, current knowledge on business and technological processes, etc).

Recently (19th of September 2017 to be more specific), there has been presented the new legal act that will change the whole higher education system in Poland. Therefore, when planning future actions of the RIS3 implementation it has to be taken into consideration. Especially that the regulations included in that act cover all aspects of the HEIs and will influence them significantly. The funding system of the HEIs will also change, so their ability of contribution to the RIS3 strategy will be changing in the future.

1.7. Conclusions

Generally, the University of Lodz and its employees have influenced the RIS3 strategy in lodzkie region in a significant way, however not all employee levels were included in the process. Only the people with highest positions took part in the creation of intelligent specialisations. It is a good idea to include more actors, however the contribution to RIS3 of any university in Poland may be difficult in the near future, taking into consideration the new legal act for the higher education sector in Poland, which should come into force soon, and which will cause many challenges at the beginning – especially for the creation of new organisational structures, policy statement of the University, new ways of funding, etc. From the other hand, however, creation of a new policy statement could be an opportunity for aligning it with the intelligent specialisations of the region.

1.8. Appendices:

- 1) Questionnaire used for the survey research among the directors of institutes/departments at the University of Lodz (in Polish)
- 2) Agendas from the meeting organised within WP3
- 3) Lists of participants of the meetings

Appendix 1 (questionnaire)

- Jaką rolę odegrał Uniwersytet Łódzki w identyfikowaniu mocnych stron oraz zasobów regionu łódzkiego w zakresie badań/wiedzy jako części procesu rozwoju strategii inteligentnych specjalizacji? (np. czy był to czynny udział w zbieraniu i analizowaniu danych) Kto był zaangażowany w ten proces, czy byli to poszczególni naukowcy, czy może był to proces sterowany centralnie przez władze uczelni?

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- Jakie są główne krajowe i międzynarodowe połączenia, które Uniwersytet Łódzki posiada z innymi publicznymi i prywatnymi instytucjami badawczymi w obszarach inteligentnych specjalizacji regionu łódzkiego?

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- Czy Uniwersytet Łódzki posiada wyraźnie określoną strategię w celu zwiększenia finansowania badań, inwestycji i zdolności badawczych w obszarach związanych z inteligentnymi specjalizacjami regionu łódzkiego?

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- W jakim zakresie Uniwersytet Łódzki współpracuje z innymi uczelniami wyższymi z regionu łódzkiego w zakresie wnoszenia wkładu w projektowanie i wdrażanie koncepcji inteligentnych specjalizacji w regionie? Czy istnieją inicjatywy/mechanizmy wspierania takiej współpracy? Czy są jasno określone plany i strategie, aby rozszerzyć taką współpracę w przyszłości?

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- W jaki sposób naukowcy działający w obszarach należących do inteligentnych specjalizacji regionu łódzkiego są połączeni z prywatnymi firmami/institucjami oraz organizacjami publicznymi/samorządami w regionie? Czy są plany na stworzenie takich połączeń w przyszłości? (np. klastry, stowarzyszenia lub inne sieci, czy też nieformalne sposoby współpracy)

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- Czy znane są Pani/Panu przykłady w jaki sposób pracownicy uczelni wnoszą lub będą wносить wkład w identyfikowanie różnic/obszarów należących do inteligentnych specjalizacji regionu łódzkiego dla ich przyszłego wdrażania i rozwoju?

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- Czy Uniwersytet, oprócz studiów licencjackich/magisterskich, oferuje także inne programy nauczania (np. studia podyplomowe, kursy) w obszarach należących do inteligentnych specjalizacji regionu łódzkiego? Czy są plany na przyszłość, aby poszerzyć ofertę w tym zakresie?

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Appendix 2 (agendas)

AGENDA OF 1ST WORKING GROUP MIND SETTING WORKSHOP I

14 November 2016

Duration: 1 day

Location: - Andel`s Hotel Lodz, Room Cotton

14th November 2016:

09.30 Meet in the lobby of Andel`s Hotel

09.45 Network & coffee

10.00 Welcome and registration of participants

10.15 Presentation outlining the current RIS3 priorities by a representative of the public authority

responsible for the strategy.

10.30 Case studies on the example of 4 Polish regions

- Łódzkie Region
- Mazowieckie Region
- Pomorskie Region
- Podlasie Region

11.15 Presentation by Mr Prof. Dominique Foray

12.00 Questions and answers, discussion with participants the within WP3

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Finish

AGENDA OF 2ND WORKING GROUP MIND SETTING WORKSHOP

03 February 2017

Duration: 1 day

Location: - University of Lodz / Faculty of Economics and Sociology / Room E105

3th February 2017:

09.30 Meet in the lobby of Faculty of Economics and Sociology

09.45 Network & coffee

10.00 Welcome and registration of participants

10.15 Presentation of the result and the key points from the 1st workshop.

10.30 Presentation by the partners preliminary findings from the mapping and analysis of the HEIs capabilities and offer carried out in stage 2.

12.00 Questions and answers, discussion with participants the within WP 3.2

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Finish

Appendix 3 (participants)


Seminarium

tona 14/11/2019

List of participants – WP3 workshop:

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List of participants – WP3 workshop:

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2. Magdalena Kuczyńska Politechnika Łódzka
3. Krzysztof Górecki Politechnika Łódzka
4. Piotr Prymusiata Nowosolno
5. Ilona Górecka Łódzkie Województwo
6. Radosław Dąb Uniwersytet Łódzki
7. Michał Izdebski Wydział Inżynierski Informatyki
8. Tomasz Górecki Uniwersytet Łódzki
9. Małgorzata Jabłońska Uniwersytet Łódzki
10. Barbara Kamińska Uniwersytet Łódzki
11.