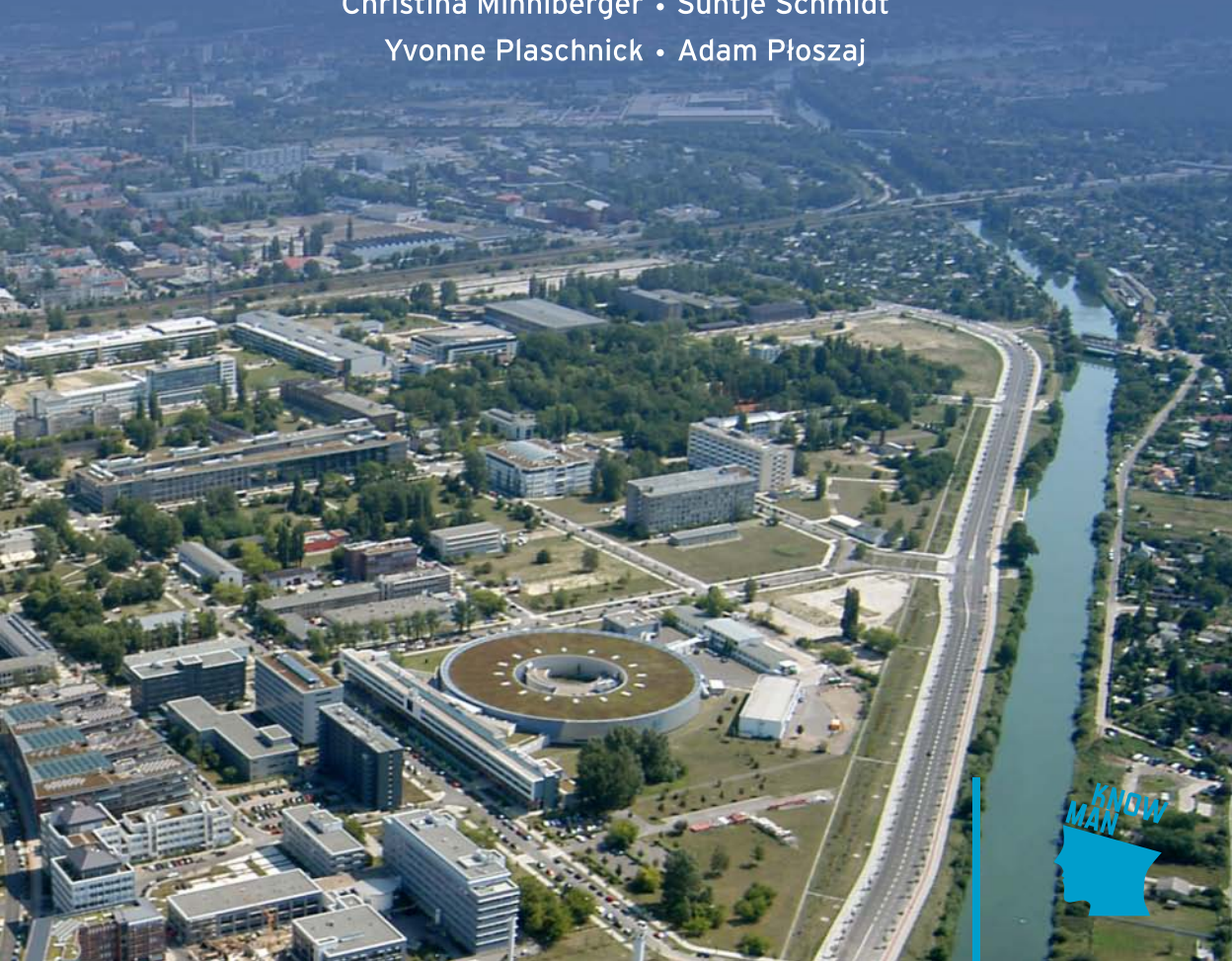# Knowledge Network Management Transfer

Strategic Guideline and Policy Recommendations

Edited by

Christina Minniberger • Suntje Schmidt
Yvonne Plaschnick • Adam Płoszaj

KNOW
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Management Transfer

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Warsaw 2012

Spis treści

1 WHY THIS BROCHURE?

Competitiveness, innovativeness, and recently smart growth are focal reference points for regional development policies in Europe. One of the most important factors in each of these concepts is cooperation. Regional innovation systems could not exist without interactions between different actors. This is well explained by the so-called triple helix model. It underlines that innovativeness of regions is based on synergies between three spheres: enterprises, the world of science, and the government and administration. This apt and elegant concept quickly formed a basis for innovation policies across European countries and regions. But the respective actions so far have concentrated primarily on creating institutions and incentives for supporting cooperation between these three spheres. Designing appropriate structures, however, does not yet ensure that the people forming them will engage in effective cooperation e.g. communicate and exchange knowledge. Therefore facilitating knowledge flows and cooperation between different actors involved in innovation policy and practice is a vital issue.

This is the broadly defined purpose of the INTERREG IVC project **Know-Man**. The project elaborates knowledge management instruments – such as Knowledge Atlases, Benchmarking, Demand Analyses – to identify and connect regional cross-sectoral and cross institutional knowledge potentials within regions. These tools were not only described, but also tested and implemented in regions and organizations participating in the project. Resulting from the work with selected knowledge network management instruments important policy recommendations were derived for optimizing regional innovation potentials. This brochure contains the central recommendations – such as a need for more transparent regional policy or the provision of a more creative environment – as well as first success stories on how project partners addressed these findings. Having that in mind, the present brochure is devoted to presenting **Know-Man** project lessons learnt and food for thought on how to improve the regional innovation landscape.

2 HOW KNOWLEDGE FLOWS IN TECHNOLOGY PARKS – AND BEYOND

2.1 The Know-Man Project

The spatial proximity between enterprises and public and private research organizations is considered supportive for regional innovativeness. However, it is quite obvious that physical space is not the only boundary to be crossed if one wants to create a rich and creative knowledge-based region. **Know-Man** approaches interaction and co-operation obstacles by improving the access to external knowledge (re-)sources for enterprises in technology parks. The focus of this project lies on triple helix structures – the interconnection between public authorities, economic actors (in this project represented by technology parks), and academic organizations to create links between regional endogenous potentials in the knowledge economy. Technology-oriented start-ups and SMEs as significant innovation forces are situated in the middle of this regional actor triangle. Therefore the **Know-Man** project has a special focus on start-up SME's and above all their links to universities and other research and development organizations, since such links are one of the sources for the start-ups' innovativeness. By developing, sharing, and transferring knowledge network management tools and practices we enhance the linkages between start-up

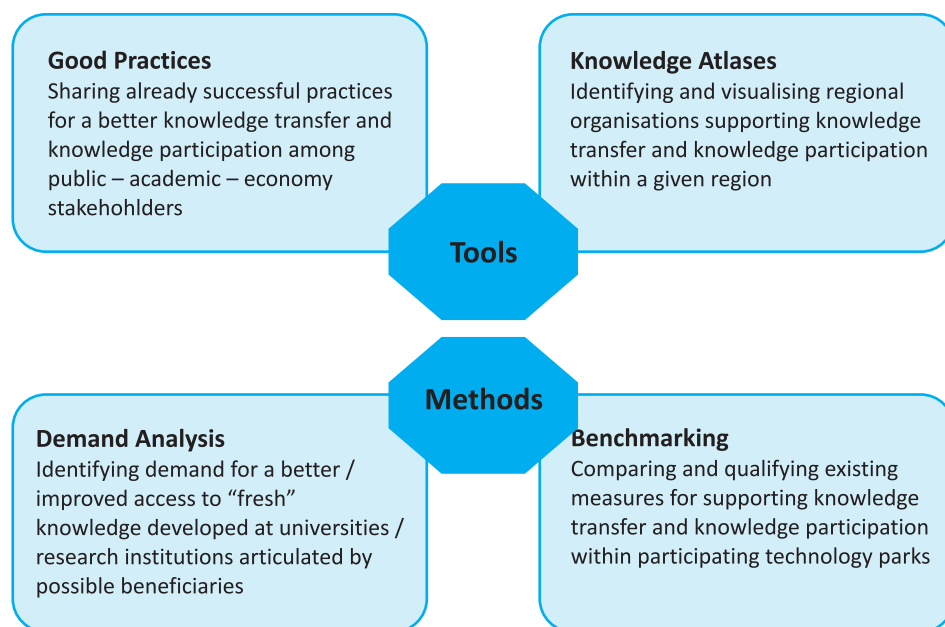Science and Technology Park Adlershof, GERMANY

companies, research institutions (e.g. universities), and public authorities. Especially technology-oriented start-ups and young small and medium sized enterprises need effective and easy-accessible tools on their rocky way from an innovative idea to a successful enterprise.

As an INTERREG IVC project **Know-Man** aims at improving regional development and spatial innovation policies. After three years of successful cooperation the project team has identified key recommendations for regional policy makers. This brochure contains the core messages from the project team – and also first success stories on how the regions have started to address the identified obstacles.

2.2 Regional Knowledge Network Management Tools

In order to attain the goal of improving the regional knowledge network the **Know-Man** project has used a three-level approach, consisting of externalizing knowledge, learning by doing, as well as transferring and internalizing knowledge through expert tandems. And eventually, different forms of interregional learning and knowledge transfer unveiled.

FIGURE 1: The Portfolio of Knowledge Network Instruments used in Know-Man

Good Practices
Sharing already successful practices for a better knowledge transfer and knowledge participation among public – academic – economy stakehohlders

Knowledge Atlases
Identifying and visualising regional organisations supporting knowledge transfer and knowledge participation within a given region

Tools

Methods

Demand Analysis
Identifying demand for a better / improved access to "fresh" knowledge developed at universities / research institutions articulated by possible beneficiaries

Benchmarking
Comparing and qualifying existing measures for supporting knowledge transfer and knowledge participation within participating technology parks

Source: Know-Man.

2.2.1 Identifying Good Practices

Generally speaking, a Good Practice is an initiative under one of INTERREG IVC thematic priorities which is already successfully implemented and which has the potential to be transferred to a different geographical area[1]. The practice is considered successful if it has already provided tangible and measurable results in achieving a specific objective.

The **Know-Man** Good Practices are presented in the publication entitled "Know-Man Good Practices: Knowledge Network Management in Technology Parks" (available at www.**Know-Man**.eu). This brochure offers a wide range of existing, already successfully tested Good Practices that support the interaction between companies, the academic community and public authorities. These practices illustrate innovative cooperation models that enable diverse partners to work together and to strengthen the regional knowledge network.

2.2.2 Demand Analysis

Demand Analysis has many functions in innovation management and in regional development. First of all, it contributes to the analysis of the current interlinkages of companies with research centres and universities in innovation hubs such as science parks, in the region and beyond. Secondly, the Demand Analysis focuses on existing knowledge network management and evaluates it. Thirdly, the Demand Analysis helps to identify a company's needs and demands in network management.

The Know-Man Approach

The Demand Analyses were carried out in each project partners' region based on one common interview guideline/survey in order to receive comparable information from each region. They were executed mainly by partners from Science and Technology Parks as well as Business Incubators' asking their tenant companies about already existing business-to-science interlinkages and the effectiveness of existing knowledge network management tools and channels. Additionally questions were addressed on their demands and expectations regarding possible improvement of such cooperation activities in the future. Finally the interviews addressed possible contributions to this by Science and Technology Parks, Business Incubators, universities, R&D institutions, and other regional business supporting organizations.

In total 127 companies were surveyed in the six different partner regions. Hereby five key issues for improving cooperation cultures were identified:
  – *Information and communication:* Improvement of accessibility and inter-activity of information; dissemination of up-to-date information fostering visibility of cooperation opportunities.

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[1] See: INTERREG IVC Programme Manual available at: http://www.interreg4c.eu/resources_program-me_manual.pdf

- *Business-to-science networking and matchmaking:* Creation of targeted opportunities to meet in person, as personal contacts are the key to inter-organizational cooperation.
- *Recruiting skilled talents:* Reasonable alignment of university training to market needs; business-to-science partnering in university education, e.g. internships and master theses.
- *Financial support:* Provision and communication of available funding schemes.
- *Cultural change of scientific institutions:* Promotion of higher visibility and transparency of opportunities for cooperation between business and science; promotion of entrepreneurship in university education and research.

Due to the high demand from SMEs, there is a strong need to provide a transparent overview of how exactly regional scientific institutions may contribute to the regional economy and its innovativeness. Related framework conditions have to be clearly defined and increased transparency may also contribute to a better reciprocal understanding and greater correspondence in terms of work culture and mentality.

FIGURE 2: Example of the Demand Analysis visualization – effectiveness of knowledge network management channels and instruments
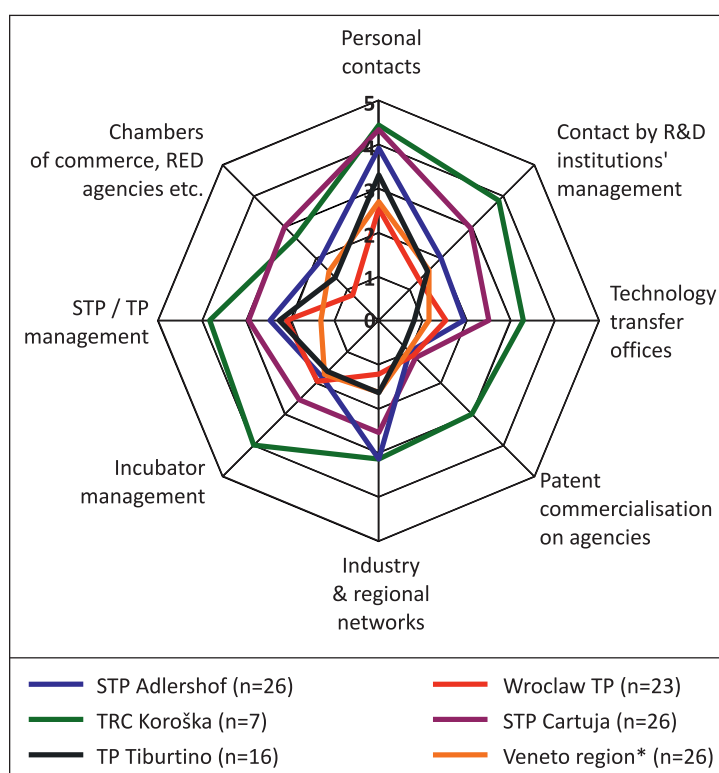

Source: Know-Man.

Sascha Brinkhoff from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Geography Department was responsible for developing the Demand Analysis process. He states "The Demand Analysis is a great tool for identifying the distinct region-specific needs and expectations of businesses concerning the collaboration with scientific partners. Its in-depth results have created a valuable basis for the regional design process of tailor-made supporting instruments in knowledge network management."

2.2.3 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a tool to learn from comparing good practices implemented successfully by other parks or incubators. Benchmarks are reference or comparison values of rated performances. These values are described in the form of key performance indicators or state-of-the-art descriptions. Consequently, Benchmarking is a methodical comparison of strategies, organizational structures, performance indicators, procedures, products and services, methods, and instruments and systems that are applied in Science and Technology Parks as well as Business Incubators. The main objective of this process is to crucially enhance the efficiency of a park or an incubator.
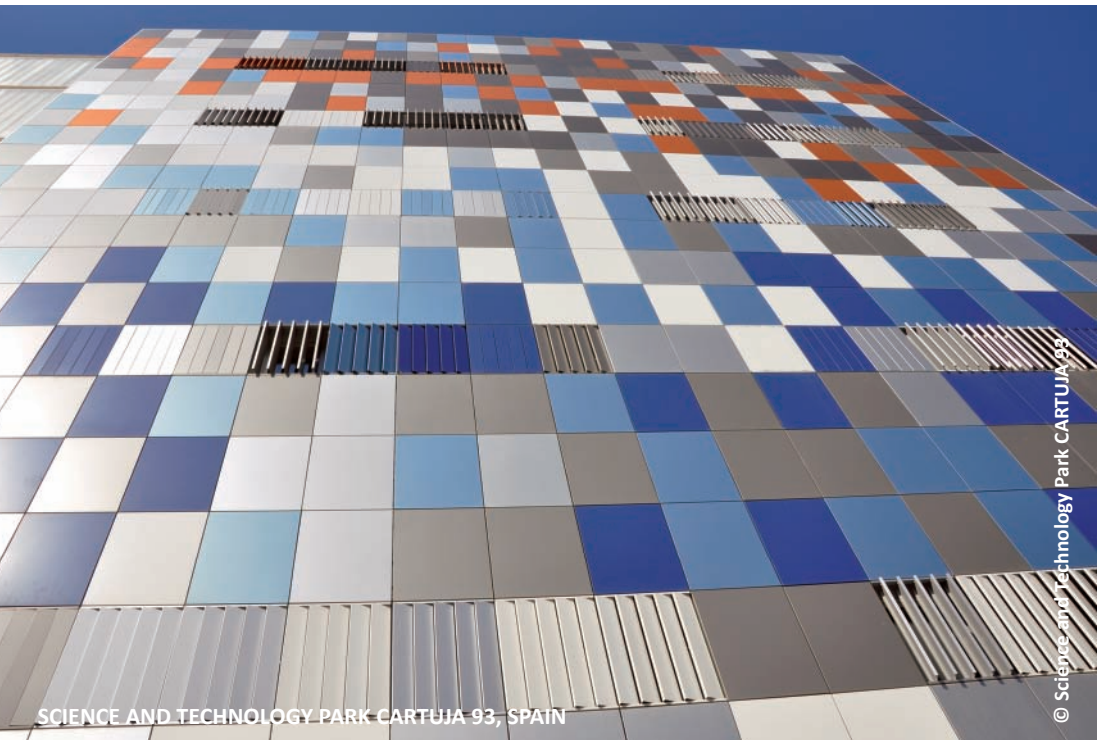
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PARK CARTUJA 93, SPAIN

© Science and Technology Park CARTUJA 93

FIGURE 3: Structure of **Know Man's** Benchmark questionnaire

	4. Technology Profile (Profile)				Remarks	Additional information / explanation / data
	Basic	Standard	Professional	Excellent		
	1	2	3	4		
4.1 Innovation Potential	The technology fields / areas of application / branches represent the prevalent state of the technology	The control of these technology fields / areas of application / branches represent a decisive competitive advantage in the current market	The technology fields / areas of application / branches are considered forward-looking due to their innovation potential	The technology fields / areas of application / branches could be the base for a technological revolution / a new technology era	*Please name the branches, etc.*	
4.2 Control of the Profile	The technology fields / areas of application / branches are not determined, they exist through the growth of the science park	The technology fields / areas of application / branches are determined in a concept	The aims of the technology / areas of application / branches are communicated, however they do not constitute an exclusion criterion for a company's settlement	The companies and scientific institutes are chosen according to the determined and communicated technology fields / areas of application / branches	*Which instruments are used? Please name it.*	
4.3 Technological Solitaires / Clusters	There is no significant solitaire / technology cluster in the park which can be labelled as unique	At least one solitaire / technology cluster represented in the park is regionally considered unique	At least one solitaire / technology cluster represented in the park is nationally recognized	At least one internationally recognized solitaire / technology cluster	*Short description of the cluster*	

Source: Know-Man

Determined references

Criterion

Rating

Questions of Criterion

Value of STP or incubator

Field for additional information

The Know-Man Approach

Benchmarking (BM) process was executed in the **Know-Man** partnership to learn about the performance and professional management of Science and Technology Parks (STP) and business incubators. It helps initiating changes necessary for successful management in particular in the view of the STPs' and incubators' clients and stakeholders. Put simply, it allows for learning from comparing good practices.

The experiences in the **Know-Man** Benchmarking activities have shown that BM is a very complex process. This results from different viewpoints and goals of the stakeholders and objectives of the shareholders. Also, there are different kinds of institutions (STP vs. Business Incubator) and the participating parks differ in size, age, and maturity. All these initial conditions make direct comparison quite difficult.

Despite these differences Benchmarking is an excellent tool for:
– identifying best services and structures in STPs and Business Incubators,
– providing information about existing good practice of BM partners,
– helping to strengthen the profile of STP or incubators, and
– helping to identify necessary conditions and actions for future STP development and measuring.

Wrocław Technology Park, Poland

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"Benchmarking is an important tool – in various aspects: It provides us with criteria for comparing our own Science and Technology Park or business incubator management performance and service quality with the management and services of others, namely strong performing parks. It allows us to identify our own strengths and weaknesses and to learn from the best in our target profile. BM also offers the opportunity for establishing new partnerships and cooperation with parks and regions focusing on similar goals, having similar or complementary profiles in their strategy, technology profile and economic orientation." mentions Dr. Helge Neumann, Berlin Adlershof Technology Park, WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH, who was responsible for developing the Benchmarking process.

2.2.4 Knowledge Atlas

A Knowledge Atlas is one possible instrument for visualizing regional knowledge interfaces. Such an atlas is a knowledge management tool that graphically presents knowledge locations. By visualizing knowledge sources, relevant expertise is identified and highlighted making it easier accessible for those interested.

H-FARM, Italy

© Know-Man

H-FARM, Italy

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The Know-Man Approach

The guiding question for the **Know-Man** atlas was the following: How can an atlas be used for visualizing regional knowledge sources in order to make it more easily accessible for start-up companies? In each region the partners developed a Knowledge Atlas, which presents and visualizes information on WHO offers WHAT kind of knowledge and WHERE it can be found.

For the project, the added-value of the atlas's methodology lies in the tool's high adaptability to each region's specifics while still ensuring comparable results.

Most of the Knowledge Atlases developed in **Know-Man** are available in printed format and some of them digitally as well, including interactive parts (for more information please visit: www.**Know-Man**.eu). Whichever way was chosen to structure and present the Atlases – it fits best the regional conditions and the regional needs.

Advantages from the visualisation of knowledge are:
- – providing an important information source for regional development strategies and location marketing,
- – using atlases as tools for regional marketing (e.g. at fairs),

- triggering regional cooperation by showcasing where potentials for coope-
  ration can be found, and
- comparing atlases between European regions supporting e.g. matchmaking
  processes among the regions.

FIGURE 4: Example of the Knowledge Atlas – Lower Veneto
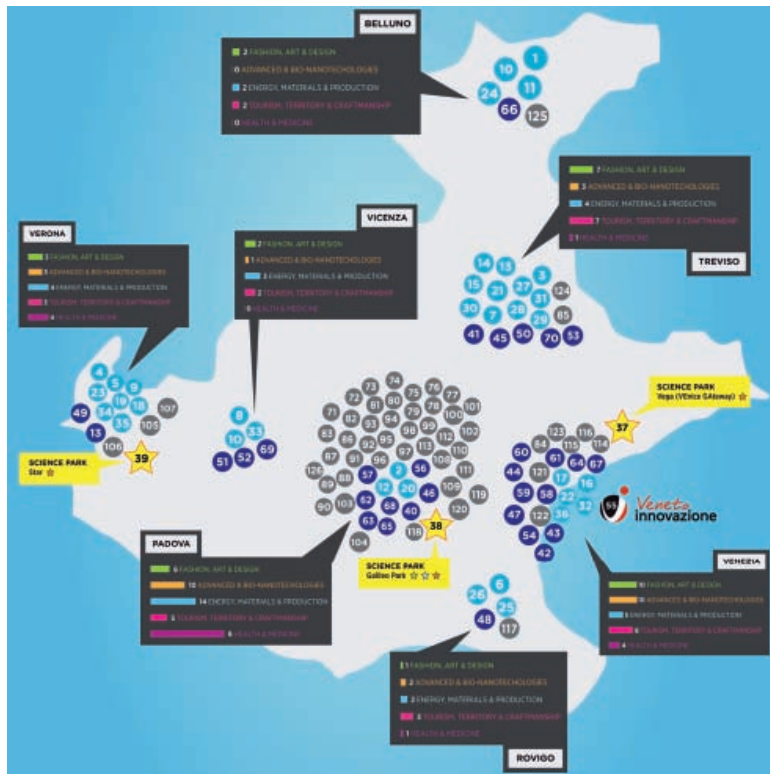
Source: Know-Man.

*"Visualizing where knowledge is located in regions ensures that the right people get access to the information they need. With the **Know-Man** Knowledge Atlas we support this knowledge exchange by highlighting important knowledge places for start-ups. The results show that this tool is promising for overcoming the hurdles between public administrations, the academic world, and the business sector – especially for start-ups located in the middle of this triangle."* says Christina Minniberger, Leibniz-Institute for Regional Development and Structural Planning in Erkner.

2.3 From Regional to Interregional Knowledge Network Management – Transferring Good Practices

The **Know-Man** partners' experiences as well as a long list of literature clearly show that transferring a practice is not simple, and interregional learning is indeed a challenge. Regional development practices do not simply use a given tool or instrument, but rather utilize tools and instruments situated in very specific regional contexts. They relate to region-specific strategic development aims and policies, and are integrated in complex and correlated sets of other tools and instruments. For transferring the **Know-Man** Good Practices from one region to another a multi-step learning process was developed – the Expert Tandem methodology.

FIGURE 5: Know-Man regional knowledge transfer approach
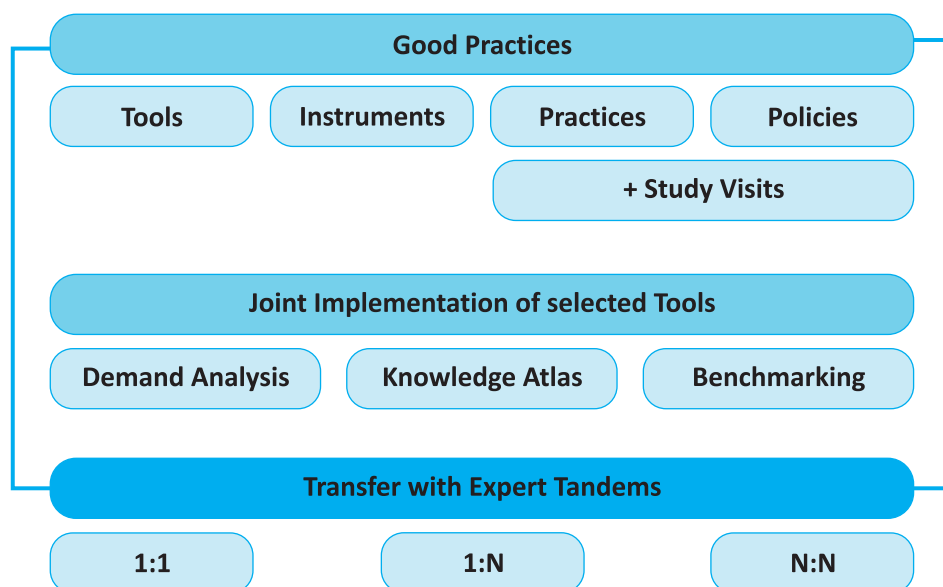
Source: Know-Man.

The Know-Man Approach

Each partner is involved in an Expert Tandem or expert group, either as an expert providing a Good Practice, or as a partner interested in transferring one. The idea of the Expert Tandem methodology is to bring together the region offering the practice with a region interested in the practice. The transfer is guided by a mix of different learning methods. A personal meeting in the offering region between the tandem partners is followed by developing a "Service Blueprint" – a detailed "biography" of the Good Practice written down by the developers themselves. After a second tandem workshop in the implementing region, those interested in the

transfer develop their "Implementation Roadmap". This document clearly lays out all steps for implementing the chosen practices, including a time plan. Throughout the process the tandem partners stay in close contact.

Business Course

The Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin introduced the Good Practice "Ideas to Reality", a course for students wanting to develop a business idea and starting up a company. The rural region of Koroška decided to transfer this practice and set up a tandem with the Humboldt-Universität. The tandem was joined by the WIWEX GmbH, the student organization implementing the course in Berlin and regional stakeholders in Koroška, such as colleges and student organizations. In May 2012 the first successful "Ideas to Reality" workshop was held in Koroška.

The Berlin Senate for Economy, Technology and Research presented the Transfer Café, an online expert platform for start-ups addressing their technology-oriented questions. **Know-Man** partners from Rome formed a tandem with the Senate in order to set up an adapted platform in the Lazio region. The tandem was completed by the Technology Foundation Berlin, the developers, and implementers of the practice, and technology parks and universities in Lazio. The platform will be launched at the end of 2012.

Online Networking

Those are just two success stories out of the **Know-Man** tandem work. Further examples include the setting up of a business plan competition in Koroška, based on the experiences gathered in the Veneto region, Berlin, and Lower Silesia. Other tandems do not follow the classical transfer of practices but rather selected parts of a complex practice were exchanged (e.g. from the soft landing service offered in the Science and Technology Park Adlershof or the working breakfasts developed in Andalusia).

The tandem methodology brought many sustainable success stories and their evaluation generated the following key findings:

– Expert Tandems triggered **increased cooperation** among different stakeholders, both in the implementing regions, and in those offering good practices. The examples mentioned above exemplify the creation of regional "donating" and "implementing" networks going beyond the **Know-Man** project partners.

– Expert Tandems unfold a lot of **sustainable effects** in the participating regions. Two examples: Based on the tandem work, a cooperation agreement

will be signed between student associations in Koroška and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Similarly, cooperation agreement between the Wroclaw Technology Transfer Centre and the Humboldt Innovation is being prepared, with the letter of intent already signed.

– Expert Tandems need to allow **flexibility**. The tandems' shape reflects the demand and competencies appearing in the project partnership – from one-on-one transfers to expert groups to partial transfers.

– Expert Tandems create **Win-Win situations**. It is worth pointing out that working in tandems and expert groups was also beneficial for offering regions. As one of partners stated, the **Know-Man** setting provided a chance to have a glance at one's own practice from the new perspective – like looking in a mirror. It gives a unique opportunity to critically reflect on one's own way of doing things and, eventually, to improve the everyday practice.

3 HOW TO IMPROVE REGIONAL INNOVATION SYSTEMS

During the work with the presented tools and instruments, the look beyond the rim of **Know-Man** led to the question – how can our experiences and findings contribute to a more effective and innovative cooperation culture in regions? After all, as an INTERREG IVC project one of **Know-Man**'s key challenges was to lift the project results from the project level to the level of regional policies and strategies.

3.1 The Framework for Learning in Europe

Interregional cooperation in INTERREG IVC aims at improving the effectiveness of regional development policies targeting areas of innovation, knowledge economy, environment, and risk prevention. Furthermore, projects funded under INTERREG IVC are to contribute to the modernization of the European economy as well as to increase Europe's global competitiveness. In order to achieve these objectives, INTERREG IVC projects should exchange, share, and transfer policy experiences, knowledge, and good practices. In other words, INTERREG IVC is a programme funding learning processes throughout Europe. It supports regional development actors in profiting from the know-how of their colleagues in other regions.

"The INTERREG IVC programme will enable interregional cooperation by bringing together regional and local authorities from different countries in projects to exchange and transfer their experiences in regional policy and jointly improve and develop regional policy approaches and instruments." INTERREG IVC Operational Programme (p. 4).

FIGURE 6: From Knowledge Management Tools to Regional Policy Recommendations
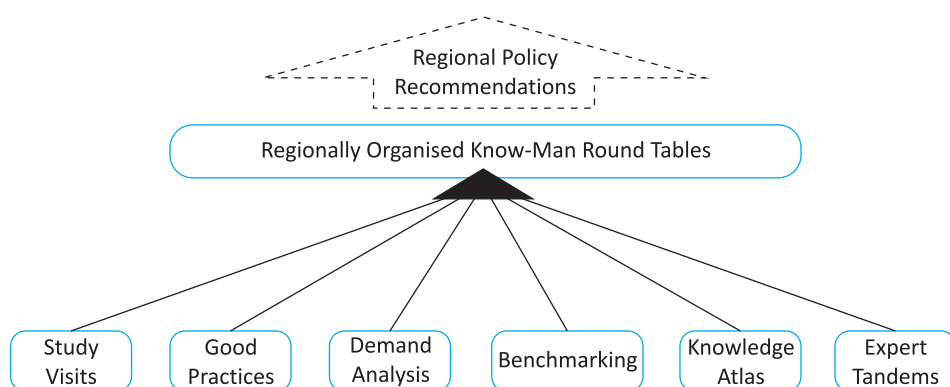
Source: Know-Man.

In line with the INTERREG IVC objective of improving and developing regional policy approaches and instruments, **Know-Man** organized regional round tables in order to communicate the results from the implemented instruments.

Know-Man Conference in Berlin, 25 October 2012

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3.2 From Regional Round Tables to Improved Policies

The Round Tables aim at summarizing the results and findings of the Study Visits, identified and exchanged Good Practises, Demand Analysis, Knowledge Atlases, and Benchmarking for policy recommendations pointing at regional development strategies in the knowledge-based economy. Those Round Tables are characterized by bringing together relevant regional stakeholders from the public, the economic, and the academic circle.

Partners thus linked **Know-Man** activities to on-going regional debates in order to improve them. Topics derived from the work with knowledge management instruments targeted up-to-date discussions.

The Round Tables presented and discussed policy recommendations with those stakeholders directly linked to policies and regional strategic debates in question. Throughout the regions participating in the **Know-Man** project policy recommendations were identified, regarding the following eight areas:

- Entrepreneurial culture,
- Transparency and visibility,
- Networking and cluster opportunities,
- Synergies / cooperation between companies and R&D / universities,
- Incentives for interregional cooperation,
- Financing innovations,
- Infrastructure / regional economy, and
- Recommendations pertaining directly to the INTERREG programme and / or project level.

FIGURE 7: Round Tables: Discussing Know-Man findings with Regional Stakeholders

REGIONAL CONTEXT
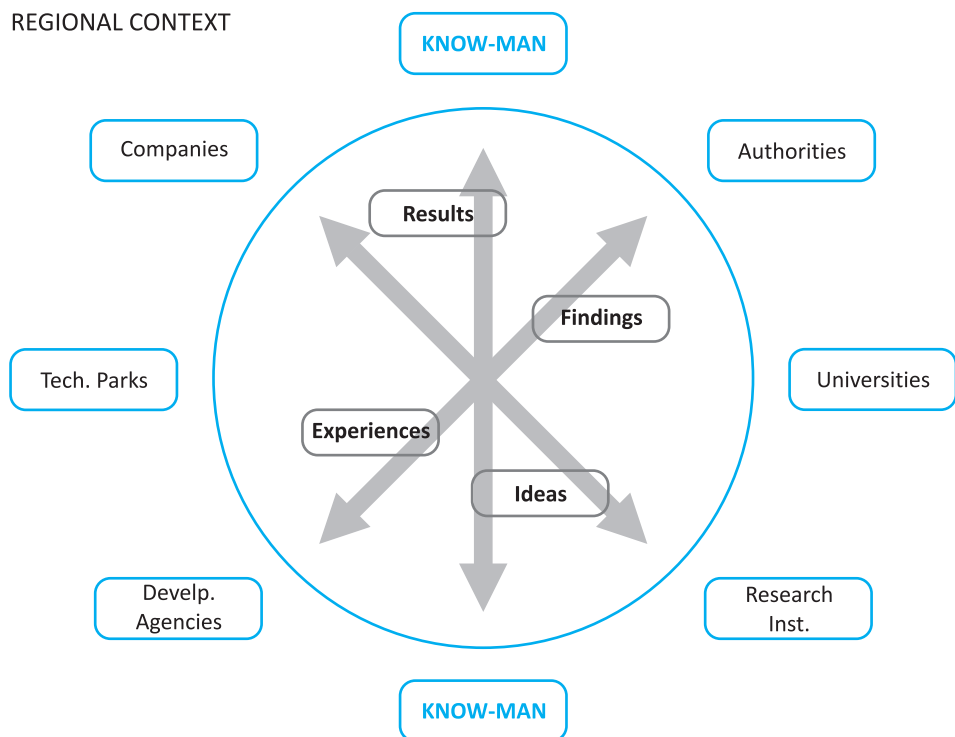
Source: Know-Man.

Entrepreneurial culture should be made more important already at the higher education level. Future entrepreneurs need not only technical knowledge (expertise) regarding the product or service they are going to develop and offer, but also knowledge on *how to become an entrepreneur*, *how to set up a company*, *how to manage it, how to finance activities, how to network, how to develop a marketing strategy,* etc. Training courses at universities and information days organized by

23

universities or technology park management could allow for improving such skills of future entrepreneurs.

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Koroška

*Within **Know-Man** the Slovenian region of Koroška implemented an entrepreneurial training course developed at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Students and young professionals are offered workshops and consultations in the starting-up phase of their company. Furthermore, Koroška transferred a Business Plan Competition from Berlin, Wrocław, and Veneto providing incentives for potential entrepreneurs. Both programmes are currently ongoing in Koroška. The Round Tables were used to promote the new initiatives and to ensure their sustainability. Success Story: The winner of the Koroška Business Plan Competition won the national Slovenian competition!*

Transparency and visibility of information is a must. Information regarding e.g. competencies, available technical equipment and services, existing research groups, on-going or planned R&D activities, and cooperation opportunities offered by R&D institutions and universities has to be made much more visible to the companies. This could be done by establishing noticeable platforms for informal exchange, meeting platforms, online information platforms, equipment, and technical service

24

catalogues. However, each one of the mentioned tools already exists in many different variations. But for being successful, such tools need to be accompanied by a targeted matchmaking in order to reduce search and discovery costs for all involved parties.

Andalusia

Work on the Knowledge Atlas allowed for making improvements to the "Business Information System of Andalusia" – a useful Atlas inter-relating and linking Knowledge agents, stakeholders, clusters, and sectorial companies' directories in the region. A regional Round Table on the Visualization of Knowledge led to synergies and cooperation between Andalusian actors working on visualization services.

Veneto

In the frame of Know-Man, Veneto Innovazione used the "Knowledge Atlas" to map and "visualize" the main actors in the research and innovation field in the region as well as the information needed to describe their competences and services they offer. The Knowledge Atlas was then presented to the Veneto Region Research and Innovation Unit during a Round Table and possibilities were discussed on how to make use of an online version to support companies looking for research providers. The mechanism of the Knowledge Atlas was then transferred as a supporting tool in a call for proposals targeting companies with no internal research capacity.

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Networking and cluster opportunities are strongly demanded by companies. In all regions several networks and technology-oriented clusters exist, but often these are either business or science networks and clusters. Unfortunately, these networks sometimes have difficulties communicating and cooperating, so they could benefit from business-to-science collaboration. It is necessary for the networks and clusters to open themselves to other target groups. Organizing joint meetings, workshops or round table discussions could be a good starting point. In regions where combined business-science networking platforms already exist, the cooperation between business and science actors could be improved for example by active "navigators" or "matchmakers".

Rome

An expert tandem between the partners from Rome and the Berlin Senate for Economy, Technology and Research led to the transfer of an online networking tool. The transferred Good Practice "Transfer Café" allows Start-Ups to ask their questions to scientific experts. A similar platform is now being implemented in Rome offering online networking and communication to companies and research institutes in the Lazio area. Round Tables were organized to promote the platform and to involve regional stakeholders in the implementation and maintenance of the service.

Synergies / cooperation between companies and R&D institutions and universities have to be improved. Some navigation systems, for example technology-sector based, are necessary in the first place in order to get the overview of who offers what, and what kind of synergies can be generated for companies, but also for R&D institutions and universities – like the Knowledge Atlas. Furthermore the business-to-science cooperation could be improved by applying for joint R&D projects.

Berlin

The internationalization of clusters – supporting cooperation between companies and research institutes in a given economic sector – is a core priority of the innovation strategy of Berlin and Brandenburg. Building on the idea of visualizing knowledge to make it more easily accessible, the Berlin Senate for Economy, Technology and Research transferred the Know-Man methodology to interregional cluster cooperation between Berlin and Warsaw starting in 2012. To support this process, findings from Know-Man were presented at a Round Table involving cluster managers and technology promoters.

26

Financing innovation is highly important, especially for technology-based companies. When it comes to public financing, i.e. using European programmes, companies often do not know where to find the right information, programme, or even whom to ask about them. Another big problem for small and medium-sized companies is the lack of resources on, and the lack of experiences in writing a "successful" project proposal for a specific funding programme or funding scheme. There is still need for information pools (online tools) on the most important financial support programmes on national and EU level, providing the first overview of existing programmes. Furthermore, some kind of training seminars on "accessing public funding" would be an option for improving writing skills for future project applications. This could be offered already at university level, by technology park management or other business development organizations. This is important also because it could help establish cooperation links in the field of R&D and technology transfer between entrepreneurs and the science sector, or broadly speaking in the regional triple-helix.

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Rome

Rome area has a strong concentration of research institutes and scientific competence, but is lacking solid links between the science sector and local enterprises. This link is indispensable for creating joint innovation strategies. Numerous examples confirm the importance of engaging young, recently graduated researchers into innovation transfer projects, as they can easily create a bridge between the academic world and the entrepreneurs. With this in mind the Municipality of Rome has been financing 12-18 months of researcher's work in a small company, aimed at carrying out an innovative project pre-arranged by the business and respective research centre or department. We underline that providing for the arrangements in proper advance is a very important factor for the transfer's success. This allows both parties to share responsibility for successful implementation of the project and ensures a clear division of tasks and workload.

Innovative and cooperative atmosphere means improving e.g. the atmosphere of interactions in science and technology parks and business incubator areas. Creating informal meeting points and occasions i.e. through sports facilities, cultural events, or gastronomy might be a good idea. This, however, mainly depends on regional conditions.

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During the study visit to Lower Silesia, the Polish partners introduced an innovative approach to improving the social environment of technology parks. As a Good Practice they presented the "Technoludek" kindergarten and education center, a place where children explore science and entrepreneurship with curiosity and excitement. Fascinated by the idea, other regions kept in contact with the center and explored possibilities of transferring the approach. Also, a Round Table in Wrocław was used to discuss the further expansion of Technoludek.

Incentives for interregional cooperation are focused on the cooperation between public authorities within interregional projects like INTERREG. What is the benefit for regional authorities from actively participating in such projects and cooperating with other regions? In **Know-Man** it turned out that the role of regional authorities' partners, as well as their specific direct benefits, were not really clear for them at the beginning of the project. First of all, INTERREG has to express them more precisely on the programme level, i.e. by using examples of successful projects beneficial particularly for the regional authorities' partners.

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Rome

The Municipality of Rome received a medal for initiating the Know-Man Camp, a network of innovators in the Lazio region. The medal was presented during the opening Round Table regarding policy recommendations on innovation management in SMEs in Lazio Region, organized and coordinated by Fiammetta Curcio (Roma Capitale). Through her work in Know-Man Fiammetta Curcio was inspired to optimize the innovation triple helix by developing the Know-Man Camp. The round table was attended by rectors of Roman Universities, representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Education, Universities, and researchers. A debate was held between the researchers, entrepreneurs, and citizens. The President of the Italian Republic Giorgio Napolitano decided to award a medal appreciating the significance of the initiative and its relevance to dealing with the existing problems of local economic policies. This success shows the potentials of INTERREG IVC projects for enabling interregional learning and experience exchange targeted at improving regional development.

Recommendations directly pertaining to the INTERREG programme and / or project level are based on running an INTERREG IVC project and the administrative aspects. Three years at first sound like a long time. But, to be realistic, three years is quite a short time for running a project – identifying ideas and good practices, sharing experiences, developing common actions, and, last but not least, executing pilot actions. Therefore, improving regional policies and strategies through the project's results is a close-to-impossible challenge taking into consideration that the mills of politics often grind slowly. The round tables were a fruitful step in this mission – but they can only be one of many steps. To have regional authorities actively involved in such projects is – for most of the project partners – already a big step. Networking between business, science, and public administration within INTERREG projects allows for mutual learning and exchange of new ideas. This alone should be seen as its big advantage. The general knowledge transfer between different partners on regional and also on interregional level was highlighted as an important point of INTERREG projects.

4 HOW TO LEARN FROM INTERREGIONAL LEARNING – GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing on experiences of the **Know-Man** project, we would like to reflect on how we could improve cooperative work in future projects, focusing particularly on challenges and limitations of interregional cooperation in operations lasting for a limited time, and most importantly, what benefits can interregional cooperation projects bring to partners, but also to regions.

Drawing on the examples described earlier in this publication, we would like to discuss the following three conclusions. Firstly, these examples underline the close connection between transfer and transformation. At the bottom line one could argue that there is no transfer without transformation and there is no such thing as a direct transfer. Secondly, setting up the frame for transferring practices one should be prepared for the unexpected. And finally, we would like to point to the fact that interregional projects do not just foster an improved cooperation on an interregional level, but also – and possibly even more importantly – on a regional level.

4.1 No Transfer Without Transformation – There is No Such Thing as Direct Transfer

First of all, we can conclude that there is no transfer without transformation. This is particularly apparent in case of tools implemented and efforts undertaken in expert tandems. Required transformation differs in scope, as sometimes simply titles are changed, but usually the methodology of developing, setting up, and implementing a practice needs to be adjusted. What always remains is the problem that has to be tackled, but everything else might be altered.

Partners benefit primarily from other partners' experiences. While it is relatively easy to identify a good idea, making it actually work is a much more challenging and time-consuming process. Our analysis proves that best learning from experiences of others takes place through joint efforts. It is also important for such close and personal cooperation to last for a certain period of time and take place in the same location. Such temporal co-location fosters "socialization" in practicing and applying knowledge and experiences – very important factors for transferring ideas and practices. However, in interregional projects this is hardly possible. By explicitly considering feedback loops in the project setting, we could handle this challenge at least to some extent. However, by now we already know that in some cases more than the envisaged feedback loops would have been profitable to the transfer process.

As it was shown in the former part of this publication, the **Know-Man** partnership implemented selected knowledge network management tools, too. A Demand Analysis, Knowledge Atlases, and a Benchmarking exercise were suggested by one partner to whole partnership. Even though the suggesting partner already used the tool in different settings, it soon became obvious that in the specific project

constellation the tool itself has to be flexible. The **Know-Man** project involves 15 partners from six regions, and each entity had different experiences with the suggested tool as well as knowledge about its applicability. It turned out that even finding a common understanding of what is hidden behind the name of a given mechanism is challenging. Overcoming this challenge required a flexible approach.

4.2 Learning by Doing

Learning by doing once again highlighted the importance of adjusting a given tool to new settings, even though it was tested several times before. For some partners, learning by doing also meant utilizing a tool that they did not use before. Basing on the experience of partners already acquainted with a given tool, they learned how to use the methodology and are now able to utilize the tool again, unassisted. In fact, some partners have already decided to do so. Moreover, implementing the **Know-Man** tools resulted in valuable added value, as regional partners had to implement it in a cooperative manner. The **practical, hands-on aspect** improved regional networks. For instance, two partners located in the same technology park only loosely cooperated with each other before. The project offered them a frame to improve their cooperation through action. Actually, this cooperation went far beyond the scope of the project, as these partners continue to develop joint regional initiatives.

4.3 Interregional Cooperation Supports Regional Cooperation

The third assertion addresses the regional scope of interregional cooperation. The **Know-Man** project designed for each participating region to be represented by more than one regional partner. One reason for this was to enhance cooperation between different triple helix partners in each region. Another idea behind it was to develop work packages requiring cooperation of several regional entities. Hence, the **Know-Man** project provided a frame for improving existing regional ties, but also encouraged establishing and developing new ones. In that way the project laid out the foundation for future regional initiatives to be developed.

4.4 Expect the Unexpected

It lies in the nature of such projects that they are evaluated regarding their predefined measures. But there are also a number of unexpected results, mostly of qualitative nature. For instance, partners with no prior experiences in interregional cooperation had the opportunity to gain European competencies. That term stands for e.g. knowledge of how to function in, and apply for, European projects, supplemented by improving language skills. Partners who were quite hesitant at the beginning of the project, have eventually realized the potentials for their regions brought by their involvement in European projects. Noticing that opportunity, they are encouraged to promote the European idea among other regional stakeholders. This, in turn, has

a wider effect of reducing the possible reluctance and obstacles to participate in future transnational cooperation.

Unexpected results often regard unforeseen durability of joint efforts launched between partners involved in the project. Our analysis shows that such ideas for future cooperation were mostly invented during the work in expert tandems and expert groups. Even though the project is already closed, each partner now has an increased latent network with contacts that can easily be activated in the future. It would be worth checking with **Know-Man** partners in a few years if they started new initiatives with other former project partners. In some cases the foundation for such cooperation has been already laid as several letters of intent were signed.

4.5 Outlook: Know-Man and New Funding Period

As the shape of the new funding period is discussed right now it is worth asking what can we learn from the **Know-Man** experiences. The new funding period will emphasize smart specialization – a notion which builds on the entrepreneurial process of discovery in identifying and capitalizing on regions' strengths in terms of science and technology. Furthermore, the importance of cross-sector and cross-cluster approaches is stressed.

Following such principles, the new funding period will discourage drawing on codified, publicly shared knowledge. Instead, knowledge will be attained by means of applying it in various settings. This indeed matches well the notion of knowledge as the ability to act, as Professor Nico Stehr puts it. When we consider knowledge as all competencies and skills individuals use to solve problems and which enable them to interpret information and act accordingly, sharing knowledge in future projects asks for smart forms of organization as well.

Drawing on experiences of the **Know-Man** project we need to develop a framework for inter-regional projects that would encourage a more pro-active approach. It should enable participants to focus not so much on transferring a specific practice, but rather allow partners to actually actively participate in it. If this new approach succeeds project partner will be supported in generating knowledge through learning by doing.

We also need to underline the role of feedback loops for joint learning. **Know-Man** project made a successful attempt at embedding this mechanism in expert groups' cooperation, but we suggest that in future projects even more feedback rounds should be used.

We often tend to forget that learning includes not only practicing or learning by doing, but also learning from failures or wrong decisions. As one might expect, no-one would happily share his or her bad experiences, but it is evident that these mistakes often lead to developing novel ideas or initiatives. Thus, it is recommended that future projects should make an attempt to provide a safe frame for sharing such experiences.

Finally, we need to work intensively on developing flexible project constellations. This means that in some cases beneficiaries might be able or willing to participate in a project for only a limited number of actions. On the other hand, some partnerships might grow over the course of the project. In case of **Know-Man**, we realized that the more we got involved in the process of implementing the project, the higher was the number of other interested parties that we could identify. However, current institutional settings did not allow us to include them in the project. A third, and last, facet of flexibility regards the possibility to adjust working plans and procedures over the course of the project.

5 CONTACT INFORMATION

Know-Man stands for KNOWledge Network MANagement in Technology Parks. As an INTERREG IVC initiative the project unites 15 partners from 6 different European regions. Therefore the project title also paraphrases knowledgeable men and women who contribute with their expert knowledge to the success of the project.

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