

OP 3.4.1

Regional development plans

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Summary	To ensure sustainability of the project each partner will develop a Regional development plan in order to show how the project can get access to the target groups (see 2.1 Relevance) of the regions.

Methodology

First analytical works, then effort taken in order to contact the target groups and get them interested, addressing hospitals then continued with questionnaires for the purposes of evaluation of clinics and continuous appraisal of the gained data, information and experience.

Overview of project activities in work package 3 (Concept and design) aimed at building up methodologies and tools for a trans-regional innovation system.

Overview of the hospital/clinic structure in the Czech Republic

The hospital structure in the Czech Republic comprises two sectors:

Public sector including university hospitals (so called Faculty hospitals), specialized hospitals and regional or “small area” hospitals

Private sector including “small area hospitals” (predominantly in the region of Central Bohemia) pilot actions for transformation of ownership which represent a kind of PPP model and specialized private hospitals

Approaches identified in the Czech Republic

National level

No innovation policy in the field of the health industry has been set up, however, there are several attractive and interesting topics with regard to the health policy-making. These topics are national health policy, national programme of public health and national innovation policy. Topics which have been already supported by concrete policy tools are the activities of Internal Grant Agency (IGA) belonging to the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic, e.g. support of innovation transfer project and provision of other grant schemes. Another example of area supported by policy tools are the European structural funds, especially the OP Enterprise and Innovations and among others the Operational Programme Environment and OP Education for Competitiveness.

Regional level

Again, no regional innovation policy has been set up, however, there is a link between the regional policy and health industry through the Regional mid-term plan for health and social services or the regional innovation policies including the operation of Regional information centres whose main aim is to provide both public and private organizations with information services. There is also a number of clusters operating, however, not many of them have to do with the health industry.

Trans-regional level

I4W project (mini-program Interreg IVC) being implemented which directly addresses the issue of policy/policy tools improvement in the field of welfare by innovation transfer. There is an overlap of regional capacities involved in I4W (namely ClusterLand and CVVI/CzechDEX) with the InTraMed C2C project. Possibilities of cooperation between the two projects are seen e.g. under the 3.1.4. task.

Already existing cooperation in the health industry

The already existing cooperation is quite scarce, however, some signs and examples of cooperation can be found.

One of them to be mentioned is the plan for the establishment of a subsidiary of the **International Clinical Research Centre (ICRC)** in the St Anne Faculty Hospital in Brno. The ICRC should cooperate with Czech and foreign companies in order to overcome the

problems with financing and commercialization of research results while strictly protecting the intellectual property. The main mission of the centre shall be the research and development of treatment methods for heart diseases and epilepsy. The time perspective for opening the ICRC in Brno is the end of the year 2011.

There is also far-reaching plan for overall reform of the Czech health system where the PPP approach is seen as the most suitable option. However, to date the reform is in the preparatory phase.

Clusters – also examples of working cooperation in within the health care sector.

In the course of conducting the IntraMED-C2C project activities almost 150 subjects belonging to the target groups defined by the project were addressed.

Among these addresses following actors are deemed to be the **key players** with respect to the project concept and goals. The actors take into consideration are mainly situated in the chosen region (The Capital city of Prague and the Central Bohemia Region), however some of them exceeds its borders due to the partially limited representativeness with respect to all target groups of the project.

Since the health care system in the Czech Republic is rather centralized – regional governments do not hold much power and are not independent in conduct of the health care policy – the situation is to be considered at the all-country level rather than at the regional level. Nevertheless, it is important to say that the most progressive region was chosen with respect to the number of faculty hospitals, medical faculties, research and development capacities and the concentration of SMEs acting in relation to the health care system.

Distinctive features to be mentioned for the key target groups were summarized in the local SWOT analysis as follows:

Hospitals

Strengths

- well educated hospital staff
- good accessibility
- excellency in certain fields of specializations

Weaknesses

- the reforms needed in the field of health care and its financing have not been introduced in the recent years
- very often absence of competence centres and of innovation management structures
- low share of private financing of the health care system compared to foreign countries

Opportunities

- reform of the health care system at national level
- establishment of innovation management structures in hospitals
- promoting motivation for hospital staff to share their innovative ideas
- enhance transparency
- adaptation of state and region owned hospitals to market economy environment

Threats

- repeated escalation of the situation related to the level of wages in the public health care sector → migration of medical doctors
- resistance of hospital staff to introduce any changes, notwithstanding any additional administrative/management work
- lack of motivation of medical staff to face challenges posed by the current system
- ageing population – demographic challenge → enhanced demand for health care vs. lack of capacities to provide it

SMEs

Strengths

- pro-market and pro-innovation orientation
- flexibility to provide unique solutions to specific problems
- mutual interconnectedness of single actors acknowledged vital
- motivated management
- open-mindedness
- existence of structures enabling spending of European funds money + existence of functional business supporting actors such as CzechInvest, CzechTrade
- qualified and relatively flexible labour force

Opportunities

- openness of the health care market for SMEs allowing them to become fully fledged actor in the health sector
- expansion to other European regional markets
- consolidation of bargaining power in the innovation transfer process
- improvement of the Intellectual Property protection
- involvement in clusters and cluster initiatives

Weaknesses

- complicated taxation system
- high level of employees protection → lowered ability to react in a flexible way to the market needs
- absence of tools for financing highly innovative projects of SMEs with short history
- insufficient structures for the transfer of research outcomes into commercial items
- problems with introduction of new products in the pre-existing supply
- problems with sustainable financing of RTD activities

Threats

- decrease in the EU public grants/financial mechanisms
- lack of implementation capacity in relation to structural funds
- competition of big corporations and companies

Research and development institutions

Strengths

- well educated staff
- relatively stable governmental support
- internationally successful outcomes of research activities (e.g. nanotechnologies)
- high share of business sector in R&D (60%)
- rapidly growing share of universities' involvement in R&D sector
- increase in RCI and patents in biomedical branch

Opportunities

- involvement in clusters and cluster initiatives
- close cooperation with SMEs and LME as well
- cooperation with business supporting actors
- focus on applicable research
- potential for becoming mediator in between hospital staff's ideas and their realization in hands of SMEs

Weaknesses

- low share of applicable research (24%)
- low share of really applicable results of research, in fact most of the outcomes are mere publications → lack of results with commercial potential
- high share of non-investment costs (almost 90%)
- decrease in financial resources in absolute terms
- low number of patents
- insufficient protection of IP rights – IP issue neglected
- small number of Czech applications for patents at European Patent Office

Threats

- decrease in funding
- brain drain by better-doing countries in terms of economy
- lack of public interests in R&D activities and results
- lack of media attention
- low attractiveness for young scientists

Other relevant groups

Strengths

- wide respect of the solidarity principle in the health care system
- huge potential to introduce nation-wide changes in the innovation transfer process
- current government is motivated to reform the Czech health care system in terms of financing and to set up new rules for health insurances

Opportunities

- introducing health care system reform
- opportunity to set up system-wide solution for innovation transfer

Weaknesses

- the reforms needed in the field of health care system and its financing have not been introduced in the recent years
- long-term strategy missing
- relatively low transparency of public procurements

Threats

- lack of interest of stakeholders in possible changes
- adverse economic situation
- generally low level of innovation across the sector

Evaluation of clinics

Based on the available data and filled-in questionnaires collected from the hospitals in Prague and Central Bohemia Region following conclusions dealing with the innovative potential of hospitals were made:

- Faculty hospitals – the most innovative
- Lack of structured innovation management and innovation transfer system
- Innovation transfer is predominantly based on ad hoc basis and pre-existing relationships
- No motivation schemes, low level of motivation of hospital staff to share their ideas

The low participation in the workshop itself shows and proves the lack of interest among hospitals which were overloaded with turbulent developments related to the campaign of Czech medical doctors who intended to leave for work abroad in case they do not get appropriate salary. Only after settlement of the situation at the end of February 2011 the access way to the key target group (hospitals) became slightly more opened for further cooperation.

Development plan - further action to be taken, recommendations

- to build on and foster the contacts established in the initial phase of the project and to extend them substantially.
- To involve regional/national policy makers – incorporate the project goals into policy strategies for the health care system – effort to address the regional as well as national authorities will be taken – as a part of this process the Local Steering Group is to be established.
- To provide hospitals and other target groups with appropriate motivation, attract their attention to the project, get them interested and involved .
- To clearly state the evident advantages and benefits that would follow from successful implementation of the project and realization of its goals in as wide measure as possible.
- To establish and develop close relations with key target groups, not only on ad hoc basis, but structured and sustainable cooperation – intense communication, forwarding the project message in comprehensive and intelligible way to as broad audience as possible.
- To tailor the innovation transfer system to specific needs and requirements of involved hospitals.
- To act as a mediator in the process, to provide the participants with guidance, advisory and all potentially needed information related to the innovation transfer process and intellectual property issues since it is crucial to ensure due protection of the rights related to the innovative ideas coming from the hospital staff.
- To extend the current background research to other target subjects, even though beyond the regional borders, in order to address as wide audience as possible and to disseminate the project idea to as many relevant bodies as possible.
- To hold regional dissemination events (workshops) in order to raise awareness on the project main topic.
- To organize the pilot innovation workshop in the autumn to test the InTraMed-C2C system and consequently evaluate the information and experience gained from the workshop, the experience will be then reflected on when planning the following innovation workshops.
- To establish closer cooperation with other projects dealing with the health sector being implemented in the Czech Republic and with the health care sector related clusters (Nanomedic, Czech Nanotechnological Cluster, MedChemBio).