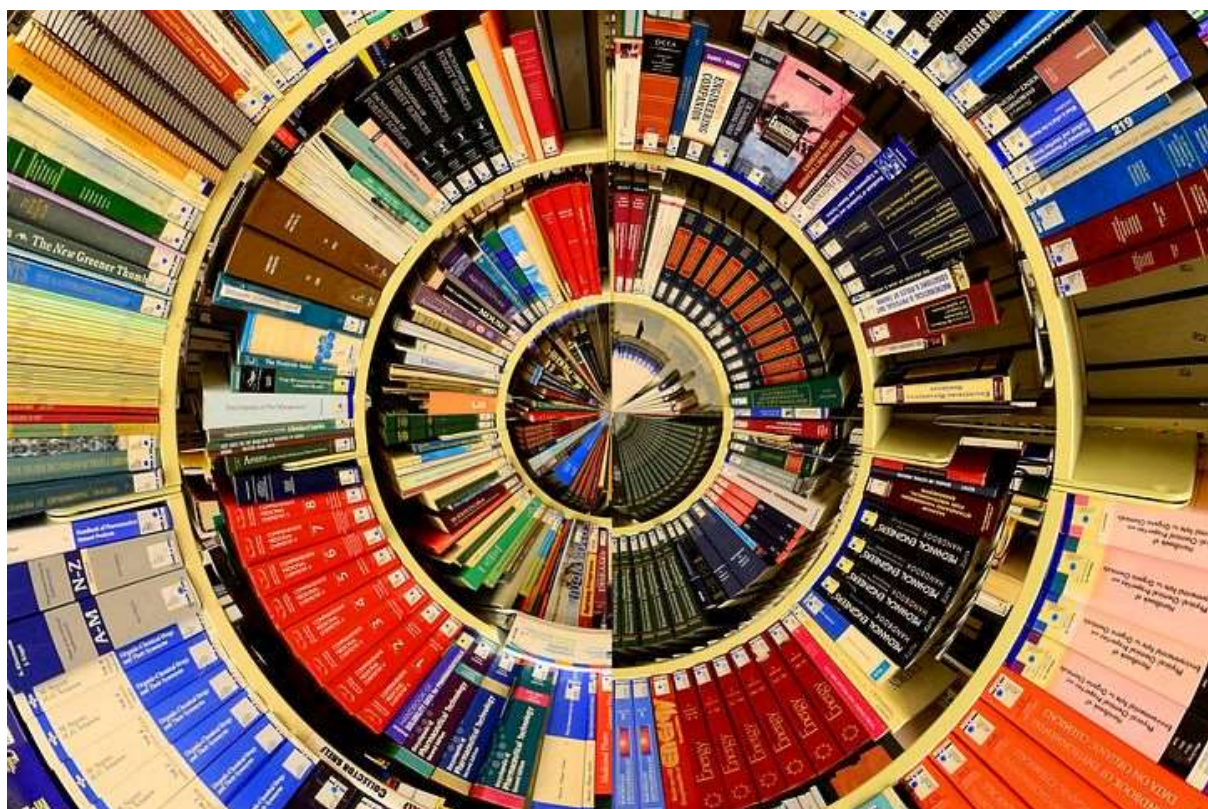


Action Plan Castilla – La Mancha

23/11/2021



Research &
innovation

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Part I: General information

Project: TraCS3

Partner organisation: Centro Europeo de Empresas e Innovación Albacete (CEEI Albacete)

Country: Spain

NUTS2 region: ES42 Castilla – La Mancha

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Part II: Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:


- ☒ Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- ☐ European Territorial Cooperation programme
- ☐ Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

The Operational Programme for the European Union Funds' Investments in 2014 – 2020, Priority Axis 1 – *Strengthening Research and Development and Innovation*

Among others, the first objective of the programme is to “*Consolidate the regional R&D&I system, boosting investment and fostering collaboration between the agents that make up the system*”. To promote this objective, the programme includes the Priority Axis 1 “*Enhancing research, technological development and innovation*”.

The general objective is to promote a sustainable and inclusive economic development of the region by contributing to the generation of jobs, especially in higher value-added activities and



to improve the competitiveness of the regional economy, especially through support for SMEs and to enhance the development of the regional R&D&I system by ensuring access to ICTs for the entire population.

TraCS3-objective for the region:

The project overall objective is to improve regional policies in support of innovation infrastructure in S3 key priority sectors with strong innovation potential addressing the societal challenges and enhancing interregional cooperation within and between emerging and expanding innovation eco-systems.

ERDF OP for Castilla-La Mancha 2014-2020, derived from the RIS3, and through Priority 1, is essential to build the RDI Regional System in Castilla-La Mancha (CLM), the main pillar for knowledge creation and innovations, and the foundation to increase the region competitiveness and its economic development. It is closely related with (and built according to) the **CLM RIS3**. The industry in Castilla-La Mancha is scarce, as it is the “industry-industry” networking and collaboration culture, which is mostly reduced to simple business associations with commercial purposes.

The Action Plan aims to impact in line **Priority 1, Area 1b** includes: *promotion of relationships and development of synergies between companies & research centers; technology transfer; networking; clusters and open innovation.*


Specific objective: Promotion of companies’ leadership in research and innovation activities; creation and consolidation of innovative companies.

Measures: Public-private partnership on innovation and knowledge transfer; Cooperation program including all the actor of the regional science and technology system.

Specific objective: Knowledge transfer and cooperation between companies and research centers.

Measures: Creation of cooperation networks between the actors of the regional science, technology and innovation system; Improvement of coordination and collaboration between companies and research centers.

The Managing Authority (MA) of the policy instrument in the **DG of Business, Competitiveness and Internationalization from the Regional Ministry of Economy,**



Business and Employment. CEEI Albacete together with regional actors will take the responsibility of accomplishing with the project timescale, reviewing and updating the RAP when necessary to ensure the RAP actions and consequently the main objective of improving regional policies in support of innovation ecosystem.

After the research undertaken in the project together with the experience obtained from the project partners meetings, as well as taking into account the policy developed by the Regional Government, **CEEI Albacete** has established for the RAP **a list of specific objectives:**

- Foster the cooperation among the innovative ecosystem actors (building the bridge in between University and SMEs).
- Improve the human capital policies (training and education with strong links towards innovation / more visibility of researchers in private sector / jobs in the new economy / attract talent).
- Digitalization regional private enterprises.
- Promote financial aid (Public and Private) to innovative financial players (financial support / multi-approach - investment, staff, innovation ... / promotion of public private funds to support innovation).
- Foster innovation policy (awareness raising / cooperation of the different agents).

The Regional Action Plan (RAP) is a deliverable of the project TRACS3 belonging to Interreg Europe that helps regional and local governments across Europe to deliver better policy.

Part III: Detail of the actions envisaged

ACTION1:

Increase the cooperation of innovation ecosystem for ICT developing a Digital Innovation Hub in the region.



Background

The new innovation scheme stresses the need to create and foster links between agents in the system. Cooperation between administrations and companies is crucial to the multi-governance innovation system in CLM. The development and/or strengthening of cooperation institutions, companies and the region and central government should be a major priority in the implementation of projects.

During the TRACS3 project, CEEI Albacete together with the rest of the European partners completed the analysis of the regional mapping and the identification of the main regional infrastructures in the region. With the focus on the regional infrastructure and S3 priorities, during the year 2020, CEEI Albacete organised several meetings among these regional institutions and stakeholders with the aim of getting conclusions about the gap analysis and the identification of needs in the innovation regional framework. One of these needs detected during the meetings is the **lack of cooperation Among regional innovative Infrastructures:**

- o In between University and SMEs
- o Low dissemination impact of Innovative results among Enterprises and society
- o Low development of clusters

This point is important not only for supporting SMEs in the adaption and the acceleration trough the digital transformation, but also the public sector at regional level. During these meetings, the issue of creating a regional hub was discussed. During the world café sessions organized in the international meetings, one of the conclusions was that *many potential users are not aware of innovation ecosystem and the services offered*. So, one of the conclusions from CEEI Albacete was the necessity to create a cluster that includes all major innovation and research players of region, which core business is to provide services to the regional industry and SMEs from a digital transformation point of view.

MA is committed to foster the regional and interregional cooperation, focusing on projects funded by ERDF. This was also highlighted in the TraCS3 Stakeholder meetings together with the cooperation among regional institutions in order to strengthen the innovation ecosystem.



Details on the Action

A CLM DIH will be developed with the objectives of identifying, developing and promoting the diversity of new business models that foster knowledge sharing and technologies transfer between European DIHs while enabling the sustainable development of new business opportunities for them all.

European cooperation in between technology oriented players and regional DIHs will develop and bring full growth potential and all stakeholders will take benefits and will generate value from it. In this respect, the efficiency of business models generating a specific European added-value out of this pan-European collaboration is key.

By exploring both intra-regional collaboration, among individual DIHs, CCs, and other stakeholders; as well as trans-regional collaboration, the project will aim to boost collaboration and create a community and commitment among the different stakeholders.

During the next 2 years the opportunities for collaboration between DIHs in different types of national and international networks will be explored. The DIH will increase the capacities to cover activities with a clear European added value, based on networking the hubs and promoting the transfer of expertise.

The industrial focus of the CLM regional DIH is included in the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy of Castilla-La Mancha, in the community context of RIS3 (Research and Innovation Smart Specialization Strategy).

Players involved

CLM regional DIH is constituted as a collaborative network promoted and integrated in an initial phase by the Fundación Metal Technology Center of Castilla la Mancha, the University of Castilla-La Mancha and Itecam (Industrial Technology Center of Castilla-La Mancha), which acts as coordinator. Likewise, various entities have joined this initial consortium, becoming part of the DIH. Among them are: The Castilla-La Mancha CEEI Network (Albacete CEEI, Talavera CEEI, Ciudad Real CEEI and Guadalajara CEEI), the Castilla-La Mancha Science and Technology Park, RECAMDER (Red Castellano-Manchega de Desarrollo Rural) and CI3 Guadalajara (Center for the Innovation of Intelligent Infrastructures).



Timeframe

During 2020-21 the main discussions among the stakeholders took place in order to establish the main objectives of the cluster and create the managing model of the cluster.

Thanks to the EDIH call which opened recently, the main tasks will be developed in the coming year 2022 and next ones. The HUB activities will be monitored during the second phase of TraCS3.

Costs

The actions included in this Work Programme focus on the creation of a network of “European Digital Innovation Hubs” (EDIH), aiming to cover all regions of the European Union and Associated Countries, including the EU’s outermost regions as defined in Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

The budget for all the actions covered by this Work Programme is EUR 329.3 million. The amounts drawn from the 2022 and 2023 budget are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the draft budget for 2022 and 2023 respectively after the adoption of the budget 2022 and 2023 by the budgetary authority or, if the budget is not adopted, as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.

Funding sources

1M€/ year. Funding from EDIH call (3th quarter 2022)


ACTION2:

Promote business innovation and new models of Public-Private Partnerships.

Background

Checking the background of the region and going back to the 80’s, Castilla - La Mancha economy was based on the primary and secondary sector, where low innovation and added value was applied to its industrial output.

Later, the regional University was established what made to improve the Human Resources. After that, and thanks to the EU grants that less developed regions received, many institutions



were created. These new institutions were focused on fostering R+D+I, so the tech capacities improve drastically in the region.

Another issue was to change enterprise mentality and to invest on their businesses in order to become more and more competitive and gain access to other markets.

So as years passed by, a new generation of innovative staff was developed under the University umbrella, but it had low impact on the real regional economy.

It was already on the 2000's when the focus started to be placed on the Enterprises in order to boost the regional economy, but this background has created a barrier in between University and the productive players on CLM economy.


It is true that more and more companies have learned about the University capacities and how they could take advantage to improve their products and services, bringing more added value into the market, with the subsequent impact on their economy.

The mapping gap analysis as part of the TraCS3 activities shows the lack of use of the innovative infrastructures in the region. This issues were discussed in the world coffee of Bruges, in February of 2019. One of the conclusion was *to support the regional policy measures on every level (local, regional, national, EU) and what can be done at the level of local institutions*. In the world coffee of Tampere the importance of the new entrepreneurs and the SMEs in the innovation ecosystem was put in the table.

Details on the Action

To contribute to the regional policy through regional/local actions that can improve the innovation ecosystem, especially targeted to entrepreneurs and SMEs. These actions are agreed with The Managing Authority (MA) as part of the strategic plan for promoting the innovation ecosystem in CLM: '*PROMOTION OF INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP*'. Through this call, the regional government wants to continue boosting our Innovation Ecosystem, especially through those responsible for promoting innovative culture, and consolidate a network of innovation infrastructure:

- Supporting the creation of technology-based companies.
- Encouraging innovation through business collaboration.

- 
- Encouraging the incorporation of innovation in SMEs.
 - Promoting projects to attract national and European funds for R&D&I.

These objectives will be held with this actions:

- To encourage innovative projects among regional innovative players
- B2B Meeting at Regional Level
- To organise digitalization training programs for new entrepreneurs
- To spread technologist hiring programs
- To create a regional catalogue of enterprises with digitalization services and innovative services in order to encourage digitalization in traditional companies
- To offer programs/training for digitalization start ups
- To spread public financial programs
- To promote the participation of companies in EU projects/programs
- Perform awareness campaign to the innovation policy
- To promote meetings with Managing Authority to present and debate the Action Plan

Players involved

CEEI Albacete, Regional CEEIs and Regional Government.

Timeframe

The action will be monitored during the second phase of TraCS3.

Costs

The call for grants to promote innovative entrepreneurship in Castilla-La Mancha for the year 2021, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. (100.000 € Max).



Part IV: Annex

Partners working on the project

Hanze University of Applied Sciences (Nederland)

<https://www.hanze.nl/eng>

Province of West-Flanders (Belgium)

<https://www.west-vlaanderen.be/>

Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (MITA) (Lithuania)

<https://mita.lrv.lt/en/>

University of Bremen, Institute Labour and Economy (iaw) (Germany)

<https://www.iaw.uni-bremen.de/ccm/navigation/index.en>

North-East Regional Development Agency (Romania)

<https://www.adrnordest.ro/>

The Baltic Institute of Finland (Finland)

<https://www.baltic.org/>

Business Innovation Center of Albacete (Spain)

<https://www.ceeialbacete.com/>

Regional Policy context

Castilla-La Mancha, according to data released by National Institute of Statistics, has increased its annual spending on R&D activities by 110% since the implementation of the Technological Development and Innovation Programme in 2005. This expenditure has risen from 0,41% of GDP at the beginning of the Plan, up to 0,72% last year. This growth rate is more than twice the Spanish average. This strong growth in R&D in the region has been mainly due to the commitment of the region to grow its R&D activities. Programmes put in place have been successful in encouraging private investment in R&D, which has risen from 44% to 56%



of total research spending. Support programmes to facilitate participation by companies and researches from Castilla-La Mancha in European research programmes, particularly the Seventh Framework Programme, have been very successful. This budget increase, which reflects the firm commitment of the regional government to the new knowledge-based economy, has allowed the establishment of new university degrees, creation of the National Hydrogen Infrastructure Puertollano, strengthening the Science and Technology Park of Albacete and Guadalajara and the creation and definition of four new Technology Centres in the region.

RIS3 Strategy CLM (2014 - 2020):

Castilla-La Mancha has already developed its own regional smart specialisation strategy, in which it has performed an analysis of the region according to established guidelines. In the contents (challenges, innovative sectors, action plan) of the Strategy Smart Specialisation, Castilla -La Mancha has attempted to find a certain degree of consistency with the main national and European strategies. Complementarities were sought with measures included in the Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2013-2020, as this contains the principles and objectives that should guide the design of national public actions (National State Administration and Autonomous Regions) for the period 2013-2020.

The working groups of experts who have developed the regional smart specialisation in Castilla-La Mancha performed an analysis of the situation in the region so that they could define the areas to focus on. The chosen sectors were the following: food and agriculture, including wine, oil, dairy, meat and other minor crops with potential, traditional sectors including structural ceramics, fashion (clothing and footwear), wood and furniture and metalworking, tourism and culture, including innovation in promoting tourism in Castilla -La Mancha, tourism for hunting, wine tourism, language tourism, aeronautical including avionics, aviation, space structures, composite materials, energy and environment, bio-economy. While the transversal factors in CLM are: Social Innovation (health, Sports and well-being⁹, education, entrepreneurship, ICTs and logistics.

RIS3 Strategy of Castilla-La Mancha provides an answer to a key question of development how to shape a viable environment that stimulates people of the region. citizens, organisations and economic fabric to adopt new ones constantly.

To foster the competitive advantage of the region based on the knowledge the strategy defines the development of indispensable elements for the configuration of a regional intelligence or predisposition.

- **Governance:** leadership that guides the vision of the future of the region.

- **Economy:** regional economic development through the generation of dynamism and interaction of enterprises in an open market, integration of regional knowledge, activation of intelligent infrastructures, stimulation of the creation of networks of regional and global enterprises.
- **Innovation culture:** attraction of talent, social tolerance, generation of creative cultural environments, enhancement of discovery and technological vigilance.

The strategy sets out a timeframe for action up to the 2020 horizon on two bases:

1. Consolidation of the Regional R&D&I System through governance with leadership in guidelines and rigour in monitoring and evaluation, and dynamism to adapt to the need to introduce changes in the strategy.
2. Taking advantage of the traditional opportunities of CLM by evolving towards driving sectors of innovative activity.

The action plan sets out 9 priority activities

1. Restructure and consolidate the R&D&I system.
2. Reinforce the innovative business fabric.
3. Strengthen human resources in the growth economy.
4. Achieve greater efficiency of resources and incentive mechanisms for R&D&I.
5. Facilitate the internationalization of companies or R&D&I.
6. Support the deployment of the 2020 digital agenda.
7. To increase the use of KETs for regional technological progress.
8. To make citizens aware of the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the economic and social spheres.
9. Sustainability - to favour the transition to a low-carbon economy in all sectors.

Regional innovation policies


- Common approach (we can find similarities between the two main policies):
- Use of innovative infrastructure;
- Capitalization of traditional sectors (innovation) in the region;
- Boosting the cooperation among public private actors (Universities and SME)
- Creation of financial frameworks to boost innovation;
- Promotion of human capital development.



Ecosystem analysis

Most of the data was obtained through desk research and from stakeholders' feedback. The main data was collected through questionnaires targeted to different innovation infrastructures. The infrastructures were identified as a result of the mapping analysis in CLM Region:

- CEEI Ciudad Real (Business Innovation Center of Ciudad Real)
- Area Project SL
- CEEI Talavera De La Reina Foundation (Business Innovation Center of Talavera de la Reina)
- Association of Businessmen of Campollano (ADECA)
- DRAMBLYS
- Science and Technology Park of Castilla La Mancha Foundation
- University of Castilla La Mancha (ARCO research group of the school of Computer Science)
- Metal Technology Center of Castilla-La Mancha
- University of Castilla La Mancha Transfer and Innovation Vice Rectorship
- Albacete Informatics Research Institute (I3A)
- Technological Support Center of Castilla-La Mancha (Bilib)
- Metal Technology Center of Castilla-La Mancha
- Institute of Energy Research and Industrial Applications (INEI)
- Institute of Mathematics Applied to Science and Engineering (IMACI)
- Institute of Nanoscience, Nanotechnology and Molecular Materials (INAMOL)
- Institute of Technologies and Information Systems (Itsi)
- Regional Institute of Applied Scientific Research (IRICA)
- Center for Partner-health Studies (CESS)
- Research Institute on Atmospheric Combustion and Pollution (CCA)
- Regional Center for Water Studies (Albacete)
- Institute of Environmental Sciences (ICAm)
- Institute of Applied Geology (IGeA)
- Provincial Institute Agronomic Technical of Albacete (ITAP)
- National Technological Center for Decontamination of Mercury (CTNDM)
- National Center for the Experimentation of Hydrogen Technologies and Fuel Cells (CNH2)
- Technological Center for Clothing (ASINTEC)



Most of the infrastructures are public. Most of them are dedicated to ICT, agri-food, Mechatronics/mechanical engineering. According to the analysis, most of them offer Product-related know-how & research services, Prototyping and testing facilities, Networking and internationalisation and IT/Databases as main services or uses. The main users of these infrastructures are university & research institutes and SMEs & large-sized companies.

The following sectors are the S3 priorities in Castilla La Mancha, the majority of them is represented in the results of mapping identification:

- Aeronautics: Avionics, aeronautical structures and composite materials
- Agri-food: E.g. meat, cheese, wine, oil, barley, saffron. Gastronomic production, hunting industry, ecological products, food quality and security.
- Traditional manufactures such as shoe industry / footwear, textile, ceramic materials and metal mechanical industry: Waste recovery, advanced manufacturing, new materials, new production processes, use of ICT and mechatronics applied to metal mechanical processes, smart textiles.
- Tourism: Neo-tourism, wine tourism, language tourism, hunting tourism, innovative promotion of tourism.
- ICTs
- Bio-economy: bio-products, biomass
- Renewable energies: wind energy, solar energy, hydrogen and fuel cells
-

This mapping exercise, done in collaboration with local stakeholders was targeted in the following areas:

- Connectivity & cooperation
- Sustainability
- Usage of innovation infrastructure
- Innovation capacity
- Influence
- Financing
- External/regional conditions



Results from ecosystem gap analysis

Based on the SWOT analysis, our research in the mapping exercise, done in collaboration with the local stakeholders, Castilla-La Mancha region needs improvement in the following areas in order to improve the regional ecosystem:

- **Lack of cooperation Among regional innovative Infrastructures**
 - o In between University and SMEs
 - o Low dissemination impact of Innovative results among Enterprises and society
 - o Low development of clusters
- **Low use of innovative infrastructure**
 - o Promote them among potential users
 - o Low Client-oriented philosophy
- **Regional dysfunctional infrastructure**
 - o Lack of a Regional Innovative Policy
 - o Low specialisation based on RIS3 Strategy
 - o Public grants not focused on Innovation needs