

Implications of Knowledge Society in European Regions - Developing the Regional Innovation System

Expert Workshop in the Context of the SPIDER-Project 27 January 2005, Brussels

SPIDER-Project - Increasing regional competitiveness through futures research methods

Brussels, Mercure Grand Hôtel Royal Crown (Botanic Garden area)
Rue Royale 250, B/1210 Brussels, <http://www.mercure.com>

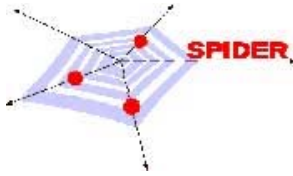
We would like to invite you to this expert workshop in Brussels, dealing with the future of regions of knowledge, innovation systems and regional development. At this workshop, we will gather people who represent both private and public sector and who recognize the importance of developing the regional innovation system from the point of view of the future. The workshop aims at creating new ideas for regional as well as European action in this field, at creating a productive discussion between experts from different regions in Europe with different histories, experiences as well as different systems of regional development. Finally, the workshop is meant to produce new perspectives for and insights into European as well as regional policy making that can support a positive, future-oriented development of regions of knowledge.

SPIDER – A project to enhance regional competitiveness and innovation

The SPIDER-project is a regional development project funded by the European Union's 'Regions of Knowledge Pilot Action' –program. It aims at improving the regional innovation systems and developing them further with help of the futures research and foresight methods. Three regions take part in SPIDER: Southwest Finland, Duesseldorf Region from Germany and Wallonia Region from Belgium. The project has started in January 2004, will last two years and it will end in January 2006.

The course of SPIDER-project

The regional action groups (groups of central actors from the regions involved in this project) have discussed the development of regional innovation systems in their respective regions in November and December 2004. A short report of the status and future expectations of the regions is prepared by applying statistical and existing foresight data as well as the results of the group discussions. The aim is to outline the regional vision of the innovation system and a possible future development to a "region of knowledge". These results will be the basis of the workshop. During the first half of 2005, the regional visions will be precised and action recommendations will be formulated. In this phase, the Delphi-method is applied. We will gather comments that participants can revise, assess and complement during spring. In the end of 2005, we will organize an extended workshop. In this workshop the results of the project are discussed on the European Union level.



Why take part in the SPIDER-project expert seminar?

The development of regional innovation systems requires a creation of a many-sided network. We believe that new innovations are born at the interface of different and even contradictory views. If we want to create visions and action recommendations, this kind of "creative tension" is needed in order to produce new insights, visions and ways of acting. By being part of this joint effort, you will get new ideas and perspectives to support your own actions regardless of your field of activities, and new information on the state of your own and other regions and their innovation activities, and you can exchange experiences and strategies with experts from other regions. In addition, the expert seminar gives you an opportunity to influence regional development of the European Union and you can create new supporting networks for your own activities on the regional and European level.

Further information

If you are interested in additional information, we kindly ask you to contact SPIDER-project staff (addresses below). He/she will answer your questions. More information is also available on the SPIDER-project web site at <http://www.spider-project.net>. The pages are updated in four languages.

We hope you can be involved in developing regional and European innovation systems and are looking forward to meeting you at the expert seminar.

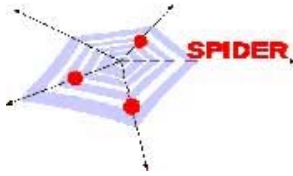
The program of the expert seminar

Content and practical arrangements

The central idea of this workshop is to bring together different ideas on the regional visions, means and instruments of regional development and innovation systems in the context of the debate on "regions of knowledge". The regional analyses of each region will be the starting point of discussion in the workshop. The aim of the workshop is first to give a picture of regional differences and similarities and then to enlarge the scope to the level of the European Union Regions of Knowledge.

Some of the key questions of the workshop (and the parallel working groups within the expert seminar) are:

- What can different regions learn from each other?
- What are the bottlenecks of regional development and the regional innovation system?
- What are the crucial clusters to develop in the future?
- How can regional networks be fostered?
- Which visions of future "regions of knowledge" exist?
- How can a development towards "regions of knowledge" be fostered?



Programme

10.00 **Opening the workshop**

Jean-Marie Rousseau (European Commission):
Introduction to the framework of the “Regions of Knowledge Pilot Action”
Key role of societal issues in energising the Knowledge Regions

10.30 **The SPIDER-Project: Visions from the Regions**

- Juha Kaskinen (Finland Futures Academy): Introduction of the SPIDER-Project and a view of Southwest Finland in 2020: Beyond Information Society
- Karlheinz Steinmüller / Cornelia Daheim (Z_punkt The Foresight Company, Germany): Duesseldorf Region in 2020: The Permanence of Change
- Philippe Destatte and Pascale Van Doren (Institut Jules-Destrée, Wallonia, Belgium): Wallonia in 2020: Future Issues, Future Citizens
Florence Hennart, Regional Ministry of Economy, Wallonia : Implementation of Lisbonne strategy in Wallonia : report on he competitive position of Wallonia

12.30 **Parallel working groups and expert inputs**

Experts inputs

- *Dr. Anette Braun*, Future Technologies Division of VDI TZ GmbH, Germany
- *Marc Halévy*, Fondation Noétique, Belgium
- *Jean-Marie Rousseau*, European Commission
- *Prof. Laura Sinisalo-Ojala*, TSEBA, Finland

Working groups on topics such as:

- societal issues for regions of knowledge (f.e. on how to create an environment that attracts "creativity")
- hybrid networks: new co-operational structures in regions of knowledge
- new methods / instruments for regional strategy building within regions of knowledge
- key challenges for regions in Europe: bottlenecks and new perspectives for regional development and regional innovation systems

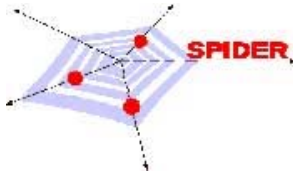
13.00-14.00 *Lunch*

14.00-16.00 **Parallel working groups continue**

16.00 *Coffee break*

16.30- 17.30 **Results, Discussion and Conclusion**

Results of the working group sessions
Final Discussion
Next steps
Conclusion



Formalities and Registration:

Participation at the workshop is free, including lunch and coffee. Please confirm your participation by sending an Email to the project coordinator or one of the regional project managers. As places are limited, please register as soon as possible. We are looking forward to working with you in Brussels. Please refer to the website <http://www.mercure.com> for details on the place and for booking a hotel room, if needed.

Contact Information:

Project Coordination and Region Southwest-Finland:

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