



## SMART SPECIALISATION

► *Strengthening Innovation in Europe's Regions*

Smart specialisation is an innovative approach that aims to boost growth and jobs in Europe, by enabling each region to identify and develop its own competitive advantages.

Through its partnership and bottom-up approach, smart specialisation brings together local authorities, academia, business spheres and the civil society, working for the implementation of long-term growth strategies supported by EU funds.



### ► SMART

Identify the region's own strengths and comparative assets



### ► SPECIALISED

Prioritise research and innovation investment in competitive area



### ► STRATEGIC

Define a shared vision for regional innovation

## KEY FIGURES

- **Over 120 smart specialisation strategies** have been developed
- **Over EUR 67 billion** available to support these strategies, under the European Structural and Investment Funds and national / regional funding.
- Expected achievements by 2020: to bring **15.000 new products** to market, create **140.000 new start-ups** and **350.000 new jobs**.

Since 2011, the European Commission provides advice to regional and national authorities on how to develop, implement their smart specialisation strategies; via a mechanism called 'Smart Specialisation Platform'. This Platform facilitates mutual learning, data gathering, analysis, and networking opportunities for around 170 EU regions and 18 national governments.

Thematic Smart Specialisation platforms have also been created. Regions join forces and pool resources on the basis of matching smart specialisation priorities in high valued added sectors.. For example, partnerships have been developed in the fields of 3D printing, medical technology, smart grids, solar energy, sustainable buildings, high-tech farming...



## Smart specialisation in action

### TAKING ADVANTAGE OF LOCAL POTENTIAL (CENTRE-VAL DE LOIRE, FRANCE)

The Smart Specialisation approach in the region Centre-Val de Loire helped clearly identify local competitive assets: energy storage, biopharmaceuticals, cosmetics, environmental engineering, and tourism. This has helped better target support for projects with high potential, such as the LAVOISIER Programme (<http://www.lestudium-ias.com/fr/content/le-programme-lavoisier>), specialised in the development and industrialisation of materials and systems oriented towards new and renewable energies.



### SETTING UP THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM OF TOMORROW (FINLAND)

Finland has focused, through its national smart specialisation strategy, on developing smart cities. This initiative, the Six City Strategy, addresses the need for sustainable urban development by exploring the strategic advantages of the six biggest Finnish cities: Helsinki, Espoo, Tampere, Vantaa, Oulu, and Turku.

Two EU-funded pilot projects have already started: robot buses (SOHJOA) and Climate Streets. SOHJOA develops sustainable intelligent transportation solutions, with electric buses already operating in Helsinki. Climate Streets develops and tests solutions to cut down greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption levels, in cooperation with local business, real estate owners, residents and the city administration in the fields of housing and transport.



### TAPPING INTO UNEXPLOITED POTENTIAL OF RURAL AREAS (EXTREMADURA, SPAIN)

In Extremadura, Spain, the local production of the distinctive cheese “La Torta del Casar”, with the active involvement of farmers, shepherds and other local actors has grown into a real smart specialisation asset.

As a result of this partnership, the Local Action Group for Rural Development of Tajo-Salor-Almonte has managed to identify weaknesses in the production system and design solutions to overcome them. These exchanges have also led to the creation of the Farmers School of XXI and the Shepherding School. These aim to become both valuable partners and training sources for farmers and shepherds in the use of information and communications technology, as well as in other technological advances in this field.



### **TURNING IDEAS INTO ECONOMIC SUCCESS (WEST, ROMANIA)**

In the West region, the smart specialisation strategy highlights the role of incubators and other business support structures in enhancing entrepreneurship and the creation of innovative companies in the digital sector – where the region retains a competitive advantage. The European Regional Development Fund has supported the reconversion of a decaying industrial area into a centre encouraging digital development and creativity. A start-up incubator was created in Timișoara, dedicated to young graduates who wish to start a business in digital technologies. Young entrepreneurs receive logistical support, as well as services such as consultancy and accounting. This project is integrated into the growing IT industry in the West region of Romania.



### **LINKING EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY (PODKARPACIE, POLAND)**

The Podkarpackie Voivodeship is famous for its Aviation Valley, a cluster reuniting most of Poland's aviation industry. To better link the academic sector to the regional industry, the Aviation Training Centre of the Rzeszow University of Technology was modernised and expanded with the help of EU funds.

