

The Horizon Europe Project ERA_FABRIC “Framing And Bridging Regional research and Innovation ecosystems Capacities for a renewed ERA” had first official kick-off meeting on March 2-3 in Bologna, Italy.

Overarching aim of the ERA_FABRIC project is to define, structure, populate and validate the “interconnected knowledge space” foreseen by the EU ERA Hubs initiative (COM 2020 628 final). Three distinct, and intertwined, dimensions, all of them relevant for policy making, are adopted as a structuring principle for the community to be built and cultivated during the project:

- 1) ERA Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems: fostering the dynamic interaction of R&D and innovation actors at regional and multiregional levels, taking into account the different knowledge and cultural contexts and the alignment of research foci and industrial needs;
- 2) ERA Hubs as Multi Stakeholder Platforms: bringing together the representatives of the various involved interest groups in a seamless and uninterrupted discussion and deliberation on strategic priorities, actions and results evaluation;
- 3) ERA Hubs as a Policy Co Creation Toolbox: a transformative set of measures and tools operating in a “middle ground” needing to be configured as a distinct space from both the EU and the MS/Regional levels, historically presided over by “ad hoc” sets of instruments (e.g. Framework Programmes for R&I, Structural and Investment Funds, Interregional and Cross Border Cooperation Programmes).

It is the consortium’s vision and assumption that the 3 above dimensions should be presided over and made interoperable, in order for the ERA Hubs initiative to become path breaking and impactful at broad EU level.

ERA_FABRIC is designed by leading European actors in the domain of regional development. The 11 partners represent 8 Member States and 1 Associated State. With the addition of the letters of interest gathered before the proposal presentation, almost half of EU27 territorial coverage has been reached.

About the ERA_FABRIC partners

1. ART_ER - ART-ER-SOCIETA CONSORTILE PER AZIONI

ART-ER is the Consortium of the Emilia-Romagna Region born to foster sustainable growth by developing innovation and knowledge, attractiveness and internationalization. It orchestrates

the regional innovation ecosystem, supports the Region in the design and implementation of S3 and innovation and development policies, and has a long lasting experience in participation and coordination of EU funded projects. ART-ER coordinates the ERA Fabric project, and leads the task linked to policy recommendations on implementing ecosystems, the challenges, barriers, strengths and weaknesses reflecting the recurrent characteristics and validated functionalities that define an ERA Hub

2. EURECAT - FUNDACIO EURECAT

Eurecat is the leading Technology Centre of Catalonia, providing the industrial and business sector with differential technology and advanced expertise.

The centre offers solutions to their innovation needs and boosts their competitiveness in a fast-paced environment. It brings together the expertise of 670 professionals who generate a volume of income of 50M€ per year. Serving more than a thousand companies, Eurecat is involved in more than 200 projects of R&D national and international with high strategic value. In ERA_Fabric, Eurecat will be leading the creation of a catalogue of measures and tools that can be easily replicated and implemented in other ecosystems.

3. ECOPLUS - ECOPLUS.NIEDEROSTERREICHS WIRTSCHAFTSAGENTUR GMBH

The Lower Austrian Business Agency ecoplus implements the regional programme “Lower Austrian Innovation Ecosystem” (2023-2027). The programme is co-financed by ERDF and regional funds and supports the facilitation of currently 4 technopoles (specialized R&D hubs in the fields of bio-based technology, bioenergy, materials technology and health technology), 4 clusters (Green Building, Food, Plastics and Mechatronics) and 2 platforms (hubs for cross-cutting collaboration in strategic domains of the region such as green transformation and health).

In ERA_FABRIC, ecoplus will share its experience and improve its services as a hub for the region’s innovation ecosystem and lead the tasks T3.5 Governance rules and arrangements, T4.2 Connecting territories through smart specialisation complementarities and T7.3 Networking with other ERA Hubs.

4. INESC TEC - NESC TEC - INSTITUTO DE ENGENHARIADE SISTEMAS E COMPUTADORES, TECNOLOGIA E CIENCIA

INESC TEC is a private non-profit research association, with Public Interest status, dedicated to scientific research and technological development, technology transfer, advanced consulting and training, and pre-incubation of new technology-based companies.

As an institution operating at the interface of the academic and business worlds, bringing closer together academia, companies, public administration, and society, INESC TEC typically applies the knowledge and results generated as part of its research in technology transfer projects, seeking value creation and immediate social relevance.

5. CNR - CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE

The National Research Council is the largest public research institution in Italy. The main CNR's mission is to perform multidisciplinary research in its own Institutes as well as to promote innovation and competitiveness of the national industrial system.

The research activities of the Institute for the Study of Regional, Federal and Autonomous Systems "Massimo Severo Giannini" - (Issirfa CNR - <https://www.issirfa.cnr.it/>) concern issues related to regionalism, federalism and local autonomy, territorial decentralization and multilevel governance of communities as well as studies about the research and innovation policies, cohesion funds and their impact at national and regional level.

Issirfa CNR coordinates WP 2 "Era Hubs as Knowledge Ecosystems" and will map existing research and innovation ecosystems within the territories of participating members of ERA_fabric focusing on 3 thematic domains: Sustainable Manufacturing, Circular Economy, and Clean Renewable Energy.

6. TTP - TRONDHEIM TECH PORT

Trondheim Tech Port's goal is to increase Norway's innovation power through closer cooperation between actors in Trøndelag and abroad.

Trondheim Tech Port is a member-based interest association for technology and innovation. Trondheim Tech Port is a driving force and facilitator for innovation and technology, through projects, events and communication.

Trondheim Tech Port works systematically with the strategic areas:

- Innovation: Create arenas and networks that connect innovation actors.
- Identity: Make an attractive region visible for new opportunities.
- Infrastructure: Strengthen infrastructure that realizes innovation.
- Investments: Strengthen growth in and of technology scale-ups

The association focuses on the areas oceans, health, energy and digitalization as enabling technology.

7. NTNU - NORGES TEKNISK-NATURVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET NTNU

NTNU is an international oriented university with headquarters in Trondheim and campuses in Gjøvik and Ålesund.

NTNU has a main profile in science and technology, a variety of programmes of professional study, and great academic breadth that also includes the humanities, social sciences, economics, medicine, health sciences, educational science, architecture, entrepreneurship, art disciplines and artistic activities.

The university's root goes back to 1760 with the foundation of Det Trondhiemske Selskab (Trondheim Academy). A merger in 2016 made NTNU Norway's largest single university.

8. UNIST - SVEUCILISTE U SPLITU

The University of Split is a leader of a Work package 3: "ERA Hubs as Multi- Stakeholder Platforms" which aims to bring together EU-wide population of Quadruple Helix actors and stakeholders to discuss shared challenges. It will be implemented through the instrument of thematic working groups, and complemented by a capacity building for policy makers from 3 thematic areas of Sustainable manufacturing, Bio-based circular economy and Clean renewable energy, as well as a collection of evidence-based governance rules and arrangements. The University draws expertise and experience for the implementation of this work package from a number of projects it coordinates which intend to promote the digital transition and strengthen collaborations between academia and small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as increase businesses' innovation potential, sustainability, and competitiveness in the Adriatic region.

9. MU – MASARYKOVA UNIVERZITA

Masaryk University is a university with democratic traditions, promoted since its foundation in 1919. It has been the most popular university in the Czech Republic for many years. It currently consists of 10 faculties with more than 200 departments, institutes and clinics. It is also an important social and cultural actor in the South Moravian region.

10. ADRNV - AGENTIA DE DEZVOLTARE REGIONALA NORD-VEST

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (ADR) was established in accordance with Law 151/1998 by decision no. 4/ 16.12.1998 of the Council for Regional Development (CDR) of the North-West Development Region, as a body of public utility, with legal personality, acting in areas specific to regional development.

ADR Nord-Vest is the executive body of the Council for Regional Development of the North-West Development Region.

11. WUT – POLITECHNIKA WARSZAWSKA

The Warsaw University of Technology began its independent activity on November 15, 1915. It is not only the oldest, but also the best technical university in Poland. In the ranking of Polish universities, it has taken the first place in its category for fifteen years.

At the Warsaw University of Technology, we offer comprehensive education in all key areas of technical sciences and related sciences. There are 19 faculties and research center (CEZAMAT) covering almost all fields of science and technology.