

Facilitating Responsible Innovation in SEE Countries

The FaRIIn project is a 2-year project, approved within the South East Europe transnational cooperation programme, which strives to enhance framework conditions and pave the way for a Responsible Innovation model in South East Europe.

FaRIIn adopts the following definition of Responsible Innovation:

"Responsible Research and Innovation is a transparent, interactive process in which societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other with a view on the (ethical) acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products (in order to allow a proper embedding of advances in our society)" Von Schomberg (2011)

FaRIIn comes at an exciting time for the debate on Responsible Innovation. Policy makers, business leaders, academics and civil society are starting to engage with the subject. They are asking themselves how the ethical dimensions of research and innovation can be managed in uncertain and unpredictable environments, in order to ensure democratic, sustainable and equitable progress. But the debate is at early stages and projects like FaRIIn can have a key input, by bringing the voice of regional and local stakeholders to the forefront of developments in this field.

This 1st newsletter gives readers an overview of what the FaRIIn project is doing and what it plans to do in the next year and a half. It also brings you a flavour of the debate at European level, thanks to the voices of some of the top experts in this field.

FaRIIn: Objectives and Current State of Play

Within the overall framework of promoting Responsible Innovation, FaRIIn:

- promotes exchange among regions SEE on Responsible Innovation;
- defines and reaches a joint understanding of the necessary framework conditions for Responsible Innovation;
- analyses and compares the current status, threats and opportunities in partner countries in terms of framework conditions for Responsible Innovation;
- strengthens the capacity of innovation actors to design and implement Responsible Innovation strategies;
- raises awareness of the benefits, potential and mechanisms of Responsible Innovation among key innovation actors and stakeholders and the wider public;

- designs, applies and tests responsible policy models for innovation in different SEE areas;
- designs local and transnational Action Plans, with recommendations for the future of policies and initiatives for Responsible Innovation.

Technical work within the FaRIIn project started by providing the theoretical background of Responsible Innovation as a base for the whole project. Partners then began analysing the conditions and frameworks of their own regions, as a starting point for the future implementation and testing of Responsible Innovation models.

Currently, partners are delivering the Local Analysis of their territorial unit. Some key points of interest about the analysis so far can be summarised as follows:

- The size of the analysed territorial units is different among partners, which is due to the given differences in resources, connections and conditions of partners and partner regions. It will be challenging to compare the results but it enables partners to deeply analyse the Responsible Innovation conditions of the chosen territorial unit and to obtain qualitative results. Moreover, the use of some basic and essential indicators was agreed as a base for the comparison.
- The Local Analysis starts with the secondary analysis, where partners collect information on basic innovation and competitiveness indicators of their territorial unit.
- In order to get an insight into local Responsible Innovation conditions, partners then undertake primary research through stakeholder interviews and questionnaires.
- In the phase of primary and secondary analysis, partners have found that the broadly-based concept of Responsible Innovation is still relatively unknown and that the stakeholders only recognise corporate social responsibility and some other environmental aspects.

Partners are now organising their data within the framework of a traditional SWOT analysis addressing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to Responsible Innovation in their territory. Finalising the Local Analysis, partners will use the special SWOT to connect the situational analysis to operational planning and to strategy building. This will be the basis for a phase of pilot testing, looking at how concrete models for Responsible Innovation can be adopted in each partner region.

FaRIIn is collecting Good Practices of interest for the SEE area and beyond:

- UGO Standard, developed by CISE: This is a tool for enterprises to manage their innovation processes in a responsible fashion, taking on board environmental and social concerns, while permanently investing in R&D. It is a voluntary certification standard (named

UGO) conceived to create a competitive advantage for enterprises developing Responsible Innovation. UGO is based on a number of principles, including the involvement of relevant stakeholders in defining and monitoring process and result indicators, the application of the precautionary principle, the permanent investment of resources in R&D;

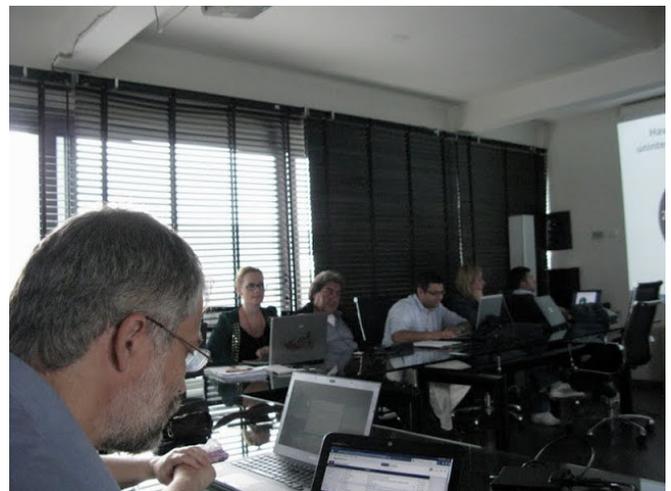
- **Litija – city of innovation**, developed by the Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia: The project connects existing innovative potentials from stakeholders in different fields, such as education, business, tourism, civil society and media in a multi-disciplinary concept. In addition to promoting innovation as a value, it promotes the position of Slovenia as one of the key centres for the development of efficient tools for managing innovation processes. Through over 200 workshops on innovation, bringing together more than 500 students, teachers, entrepreneurs and media representatives and an award scheme for InJo (innovation journalism), the project has helped to establish innovative local communities and raise awareness of the importance of innovation. The project highlights two features of Responsible Innovation; transparency and interactivity. The involvement of a wide range of stakeholders covering all the relevant actors of the local community show how public involvement can facilitate the understanding of Responsible Innovation and its embedding in society;

- **The best our Mountains** have to offer, developed by the Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi & Prokletije. This regional branding project has brought together some of the small craft companies producing traditional, organic goods in the Montenegrin mountains. The common brand (logo and packaging) and support with distribution channels is an example of process innovation, which provides addition income for companies operating according to responsible principles.

For more information on the FaRInn good practices, contact us at: giulia.bubbolini@ciseonweb.it.



FaRInn at the city-wide event S-Legami in Forli, Italy



Project partners will collect information on innovation and competitiveness indicators in order to obtain a general overview of their territorial unit.



At the partner meeting in Forli (Italy), partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Montenegro, Romania and Slovenia presented the activities they had implemented



Words from the Experts: “A Conversation on Responsible Innovation in Europe”

The FaRIInn mid-term conference “**A Conversation on Responsible Innovation in Europe**” was organised within the framework of the **S-Legàmi** event on Responsible Innovation held in Forlì (Italy) on 17-18 May 2013 (<http://www.innovazioneresponsabile.it>).

Europe’s most recognised experts from the field of responsible innovation proposed a possible framework for Responsible Innovation, addressed some of the main barriers to its application and emphasised the importance of collaboration and participation in the process of for Responsible Innovation.

The event was moderated by **Simone Arnaldi**, Research Fellow and Research Staff Coordinator at the Centre for Environmental Law Decisions and Corporate Ethical Certification of the University of Padua (IT). Dr Arnaldi opened the event by introducing the concept of responsible innovation (RI), which is gradually gaining importance at European level. Debate has recognised the need to shift from questions of accountability and prevention in innovation to the more proactive question of stewardship.

René von Schomberg, Policy Officer at DG Research of the European Commission, discussed the issue of normative anchor points of RI – what should the norms be and how can they help innovation to be more responsible? He stressed that responsible innovation is not just a path for economic growth, but for high-quality economic growth. Growth cannot be considered progress if innovation is structured around difficult, underpaid and risky working environments. He congratulated the uniqueness of the FaRIInn project, which is one of the first in Europe to attempt to develop a coherent framework for responsible innovation.



Europe’s most recognised experts from the field of responsible innovation discussed responsible innovation

Xavier Pavie Ph.D, Director of the Institute for Strategic Innovation & Services, ESSEC Business School (FR), stressed the complexity of the innovation process and, even more so, of the responsible innovation process. As the innovator’s products and services are launched into civil society and eventually affect the lives of its citizens, their responsibility needs to be addressed within the context of the company, starting with three questions: Are companies supposed to provide an answer to every need? How are they supposed to deal with the direct and indirect impacts of their innovation? And how are they supposed to lead change?

Richard Owen, Chair of Responsible Innovation and Director of Postgraduate Research at the University of Exeter (UK) and joint editor of the book *Responsible Innovation: Managing the Responsible Emergence of Science and Innovation in Society*, which will be published in Spring 2013, suggested a framework for responsible innovation, which responds to the questions: what kind of future do we want innovation to bring about? What values should it represent? And how do we proceed under conditions of ignorance and uncertainty that are inherent to the innovation process?

Hilary Sutcliffe, Director of the think-tank Matter (UK) and author of the publication *A report on Responsible Research and Innovation*, considered the question of participation and emphasised how important it is to consider the different needs of various stakeholders (from investors, to NGOs, to retailers, among others). She reminded the audience that some of the initial elements of RI do not always seem able to stimulate innovation. For example, precaution may seem like the opposite of innovation and yet research has shown it to be an important catalyst for innovation.

For more details, the event report is available for download at: <http://www.farinn.eu/pdf/FaRIInn-MidTermEvent-Report.pdf>.

FaRInn Brochure

A new brochure of the FaRInn project was published, which aims to present the project and define the project's main objectives. In the brochure you can also find a presentation of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme, which promotes essential transnational cooperation between 16 very different countries in important development related fields, such as innovation and entrepreneurship, environmental protection, accessibility and sustainable growth.

The official project brochure can be downloaded from: http://www.farinn.eu/pdf/FaRinn_brochure.pdf.



- Supporting small businesses to implement a responsible innovation strategy in their project.

KARIM's vision of the concept of Responsible Innovation takes into account various environmental, societal, social and economic concerns throughout the innovation process.

The main guideline is both economic and sustainable: **creating value for the society while respecting the environment**. The 4 following elements are considered as success keys to the project's approach:

- The 3 pillars of **sustainable development** (social, economic & environmental).
- **The lifecycle of the product or service**: all environmental, social and economic impacts are analysed throughout the lifecycle. Controlling every step of the lifecycle leads to a better anticipation for a Responsible Innovation process, product or service.
- **The stakeholders of the project**: It is essential to identify stakeholders' expectations and interests in order to make decisions in full awareness of any consequence.
- **The long-term vision**: the key challenge is to successfully detect potential obstacles to the development of innovation, and thereby secure a competitive edge.

Responsible Innovation looks at new business models (functional, circular). It encourages us to **evolve in our way of working**. This could be by limiting use of natural resources, by reducing waste or by differentiating activities. Importantly, Responsible Innovation is not a short term fad. It is something to be maintained as a long term part of any innovation strategy.

Among the many activities that KARIM carries out, support to SMEs is provided through a **Responsible Innovation diagnostic tool** (RI flash diagnostic). A multi-criteria analysis is carried out by an adviser through a questionnaire on **Environment, Social Issues, Economics and Approach**. It enables to identify stakes, strong points and areas for possible improvement. They provide recommendations for SMEs and orient them towards solutions, tools and key contacts. KARIM also addresses responsible innovation through the prism of the ICT sector with an online autodiagnostic for an ICT project (coming soon).

FaRInn and Cooperation

FaRInn partners know that Responsible Innovation can only be promoted on a wide scale if we all work together.

Given the embryonic nature of debate at regional level on Responsible Innovation, there are not many cooperation initiatives dealing with the theme. One exception is the **KARIM** project – the **Knowledge Acceleration & Responsible Innovation Meta-network**.

KARIM is a European project, co-funded by the INTERREG IVC North West Europe Programme – <http://www.nweurope.eu>, involving a wide range of innovation agencies and universities. One of its primary goals is to define a framework for SMEs, support actors and policy-makers, concerning Responsible Innovation from an SME perspective.

The KARIM project has two main objectives:

- Raising awareness among entrepreneurs, but also support actors on the potential of responsible innovation for businesses.



For more information on the KARIM project, visit www.karimnetwork.com and stay connected with North-West European stakeholders of Responsible Innovation via their LinkedIn group, our Twitter account and our YouTube Channel.

FaRInn has also participated at a number of European wide events, which have helped to spread the project message.



Cogita Project – Joint Event

On 11 March 2013 in Brussels, an event was organised within the context of the INTERREG IVC project **COGITA – Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility through Public Policy**, whose overall objective is to improve public policies supporting the uptake of an integrated concept of CSR—combining social and environmental aspects—in SMEs.

In addition to FaRIInn, COGITA invited 3 other likeminded projects (all co-financed by the INTERREG IVC Programme – <http://www.interreg4c.eu/>) to participate in a one-day exchange and networking event: **DESUR – Developing Sustainable Regions through Responsible SMEs**, **CCIC – Complex Challenges, Innovative Cities, Innovot – Improving Regional Policies, Promoting and Motivating Non-Technological Innovation in SMEs**.



*The event was organised within the context of the INTERREG IVC project **COGITA – Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility through Public Policy***

During the Joint Event, participants exchanged ideas and knowledge among projects working on similar themes in order to identify synergies and areas for cooperation, **build capacity** among CSR operators in participative methods of exchange and engagement and lay the foundations for the **EU network** of responsible local authorities working on CSR.

The aim of the day was to **bring people together and help them learn from each other** in a new way. The techniques moved away from standard workshop formats with the classic pattern of an active speaker and a passive audience. Instead they stimulate creativity, exchange of ideas and networking and encourage all participants to take up an active role.

For more details, check out the Event Report at: <http://cogitaproject.eu/images/pdf/130306-COGITA-JointEvent-Report.pdf>.

Workshop on Companies' Social Responsibility

On 7 January 2013, a two-day conference on companies' social responsibility was held in Zagorje (Slovenia) within the **DESUR** project. The participants from Greece, Ireland, Italy, Hungary, Spain and Slovenia discussed the **challenges of regional sustainable development and possibilities of surviving in the context of ever more demanding economic competitiveness**.



The participants from Greece, Ireland, Italy, Hungary, Spain and Slovenia discussed the challenges of regional sustainable development

Guests from Bologna presented a comparative study of the European region **promoting social responsibility in small and medium-sized companies**, which was created within the framework of the project. The FaRIInn project was presented, as well as its aims to create a model of responsible innovation promotion which must include the principles of sustainability, social responsibility and better quality of life.

For more information visit: <http://www.desur.eu/>.

FaRInn Project at the SEE Annual Event in Bucharest

On 19 June 2013, FaRInn participated at the SEE annual event "SEE Achievements in view of the new programmes in the area", held in Bucharest (Romania). FaRInn had its own stand inside the project exhibition fair, where promotional materials of the project were being distributed.



FaRInn participated at the SEE annual event "SEE Achievements in view of the new programmes in the area"

With around 450 participants, the event included a conference discussing the future programming period and the achievements of the SEE programme. Projects were invited to participate in thematic capitalisation sessions and in a project fair. Information on the event will soon be available on the SEE website: www.southeast-europe.net.

Further Information

The FaRInn partnership consists of **8 partners from 7 SEE countries**, working together with their local stakeholders.

Feel free to contact them for more information:

- Lead Partner – Centre for Innovation and Economic Development, Italy
www.ciseonweb.it
- Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia, Slovenia
www.razvoj.si
- Timis County Economic and Social Development Agency, Romania
www.adetim.ro
- University of Szeged, Hungary
www.u-szeged.hu/english/
- Chamber of Samos, Greece
www.samoscci.gr
- North Aegean Region, Greece
www.pvaigaiau.gov.gr
- Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi & Prokletije, Montenegro
www.bjelasica-komovi.me
- Sarajevo Economic Region Development Agency, Bosnia and Herzegovina
www.serda.ba
- Technical and Management Support from Resolvo Srl, Italy
www.resolvo.eu

Or check out our website at: <http://www.farinn.eu/>.

For more information on the South East Europe Programme, visit the website at: <http://www.southeast-europe.net>.

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