

Implementation of Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland - regional aspects for wellbeing technology and social innovations

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▲ Basic facts & figures

- Regions involved in the programme: Kainuu, North Savo, South Savo and North Karelia
- Budget: Total 3.5 m euro out of which 2.0 m euro (ERDF) from the Commission
- Implementation period: 2006 - 2008
- Application procedure for pilot projects: Two application rounds in year 2006, 47 project applications were handed in
- Pilot projects carried out: 15 projects + technical assistance, associated measures and research and identification of good practices
- Average size of pilot projects: 200 000 euros, average duration 2 years
- Administrative authority: Regional Council of North Karelia; steering committee with representatives from all the central organizations in Eastern Finland responsible for administering and carrying out the Objective 1 program



▲ **Agenda for Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland:**

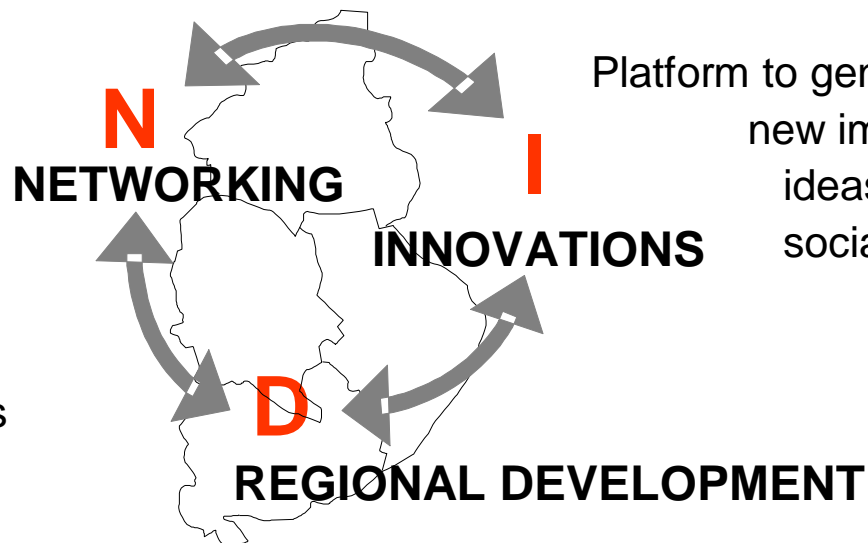
“ Creation of user and customer oriented new innovations, products and operational models utilizing new technological solutions for the social welfare and healthcare sector”

- > generate new business activities
- > launch and support innovations that combine technological aspects, needs of end-users and cooperation between the private, public and third sector
- > facilitate networking between regions and local actors in Eastern Finland
- > promote use of welfare technology in Eastern Finland



▲ **Vision for regional collaboration and innovation-driven development in Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland:**

Regional networks between private and public sector in e.g. healthcare, interaction between research institutions, public administration, national and international stakeholders



Platform to generate innovations, new impulses and creative ideas, mutual learning, social capital

Enhanced regional development, stronger regional economy, spin-offs & new market possibilities for welfare products and services



▲ **Topics of the projects carried out in Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland:**

Wellbeing of children and youth (3)

Wellbeing at work (2)

Services for ageing people and handicapped persons (3)

Wellbeing tourism (4)

Business actions (4)

- All the funded projects had wide-scale cross-regional partnership networks and interest groups
- Responsible actors in the projects included regional development companies, universities and universities of applied sciences, companies and joint authorities of the regions



▲ **Special features in programme implementation:**

- Organized international study tours and peer review visits for project actors and partners
- Regularly meetings for project managers
- Programme evaluation carried out as a linear process with the projects, which gave useful information both to project actors and managing authority
- Networking events and thematic forums (e.g. wellbeing tourism forums for scientists, project actors and business representatives)
- Active participation in IANIS and Eris@ -networking events
- Cooperation between three regional Innovative Actions programmes in Finland (South Finland, North Finland and Åland)



▲ **Success stories in the programme:**

- "Intelligent treatment paths", implemented by Vivia Ltd.
- Two new products based on ideas from group of doctors who have several years of experience in health care
 - 1. The support for clinical decision-making
Online medical consultation that allows doctors in local health centers to receive professional opinions and support from colleagues
 - 2. The support for safe medical treatment service
Online service that combines pharmaceutical report and clinical report aiming at rationalization of medication, safe use of medicine and patient's wellbeing especially among the elderly people
 - Based on the experimentations the need for the both services is clear and they will be launched as business products nationwide
 - The cost savings obtained with the services will benefit the municipalities, patients and the whole public health system



▲ **Success stories in the programme:**

”The utilization of technology in wellbeing at work services”, implemented by Karpakka Rehabilitation center

- Challenge: ”How to encourage work communities to promote physical wellbeing and fitness and gain their commitment to it?”
- Creation and testing of service concept that combines use of modern technology, personal coaching and motivation
- Pilot scheme was tested with 200 employees from three different work communities. After physical measurements, risk factor assessment and analysis for mental wellbeing, participants set their own targets for improvements
- Each participant was given a personal activity monitor, which allows person him/herself or personal trainer to check on-line how physical activity is taking place
- Feedback from the pilot scheme was very positive on personal level of participants as well as in work communities as whole
- Kaprakka Rehabilitation Center is currently marketing the product as wellbeing service for work communities



▲ **Lessons learnt from the Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland:**

- Concentration on one major theme (social innovations and welfare) and large-scale regional cooperation in the programme have proven successful
- Presence of SME's in project alliances brings in real business motivations and principles of efficiency, which seem to affect positively on the outcomes
- Open innovation environment and strategic networks take form during much longer periods than average projects, which puts pressure on regional administrative councils to further promote and put forward new instruments to finance long-term innovation development in the regions
- Binding evaluation process into the project implementation brings benefits and new perspectives to all actors
- Social capital within the networks and new forms of cooperation are likely among the most permanent results that foster regional innovation development within the actors involved



To conclude:

- Innovative Actions programme in Eastern Finland has achieved its goals well, although some of the pilot projects were affected by tight schedules
- In the future, in order to further promote social innovations in the peripheral regions in Eastern Finland and to improve the competitive edge in regional innovation development, we should focus on the aspects of....
- networking and collaboration within the regions as well as between the regions
- regional clusters in welfare sector
- spreading and diffusing of knowledge and expertise efficiently
- active searching and evaluation of new finance models and use of venture capital
- accomplishing innovation policies support and enhance regional innovation development in all levels
- sharing common visions and goals



Thank you for your attention!

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