Benchmarking: Best Practices of the Regions

Governance Issues and Poles of Excellence

VERITE
Innovating regions in Europe
Benchmarking RTDI policies at regional level

Presentation:

- The « bases » for benchmarking European regional experiences
  - A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking (Agropolis /LR)
  - A new challenge for regional benchmarking
  - A new project to achieve results in benchmarking
1. The « bases » (i)

General context:

- From the 1980’s, regional and local authorities have been paying more and more attention to RTDI issues, which has resulted in:

  ⇔ Multiplication of science parks, technological parks, technopoles, based on local/regional initiatives + regional policies and programmes oriented to supporting technology transfer and university – industry relationship
1. The « bases » (ii)

General context:

- From the early 90’s: globalisation of markets + implementation of the « Single Market » + growing rate of innovation + development of « science-based » industries (biotech), which has resulted in:
  - increased importance of the competitiveness issue for regions
  - all levels of governance under pressure to offer the best possible conditions for innovation and support to « scientific clusters » (Poles of Excellence)
1. The « bases » (iii)

General context:

- The process has been supported by EU policies: Stride (community initiative), Sprint/Sc. Parks Consultancy Scheme, Innovation Programme (DG Entreprise)/RITTS, Innovative Actions (Art.10 ERDF)/RIS, RIS+, role of Structural Funds
- ... and now European Research Area (FP6) and Networks of Excellence
The « bases » : some key points (iv)

• Comparing policies, practices, procedures, ressources and performances between regions through a benchmarking exercise is essential to the improvement of regional development and competitiveness
1. The « bases » : 2002 data (v)

The last *Eurostat data* (13/03/2002) present RTDI figures within the EU regions, based on patents demands, in 2000:

- a concentration of RTDI in some regions: more than half of the patents demands have been presented by 13 regions (out of 211)
- a strong regional concentration within each member-states (2 regions for each, where demand is over 40% of the total of national demand)
1. The « bases »: Lisbon strategy (vi)

- Within 10 years, Europe should become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world:
  - Sustainable development
  - Greater social cohesion
  - Open method of co-ordination and benchmarking (as a continuous, mutual learning process)
  - RTDI as top priority – ERA
  - Labour market
  - Forms of governance
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking (Agropolis /LR)

A regional exercise: Evaluation of Agropolis impact on the regional economy (Languedoc-Roussillon)

In the late 90’s (1998) and 15 years after its creation, assessment of Agropolis large S&T complex based in Montpellier (FR): two steps

- Relationship between national and regional levels (Contrat de Plan Etat Région)
- Impact on the regional economy - and awareness of this impact

**Agropolis** scientific complex, short description

- **Agropolis** is an umbrella-organisation
- **Members**: 26 institutions of which Universities, Public Research orgs., T.T. structures, in the field of agronomy and related life sciences, resulting from the history of Montpellier Univ., and national and regional governments push
- **Objectives**: constitute a critical mass, favour interdisciplinarity and effective relationship between members, increase the efficiency of international S&T cooperation
- **Services**: location for networks and units, information, international partnerships (int’l meetings, newsletters); stagiaires, T.T. to industry (links with the science park and the reg. Fed. Of Agrofood industries
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Institutional framework:

- National level: personnel status and salaries, public research organisations with national/international strategies, research orientations and programmes:
  - in that way Agropolis has been recently labelled as a « Genopole » Pole of Excellence under French « Programme Génomique »)
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Institutional framework:

- Regional level of governance: Contrat de Plan Etat Région
  - Taking into account regional strategies: more technology transfer- and business-oriented
  - Co-financing of related infrastructures
  - Support to constitution of an « informal » concentration of S&T resources and expertise in biological control (CILBA)
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Impact on regional economy

- Contribution to regional GDP: wages and salaries, national R&D budget in the region; LR is the 4th. French region for research, and among the poorest in France (GDP per capita)
- Agropolis « community » (1998): 6775 people of which 1/3 of researchers and academics, 1/2 students
- Wages and salaries (1998): 112 million
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Impact on regional economy:

- Annual consolidated budget of the Agropolis community: around 182 million €, 20% from private research contracts
- The Convention Centre of Montpellier hosts 240 manifestations per year of which 40 are « scientific », 8 on agronomy, tropical and mediterranean agriculture and related fields (main events)
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Impact on regional economy:

- Conferences, conventions and seminars organised by the Agropolis member-institutions represent c. 8% of the total overnight stays (Montpellier and surrounding areas)
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

- But significant difference of objectives between national organisms, « smaller » institutions and local/regional authorities
- But limited impact and few quantifiable results in regional SMEs in the agro-food sector
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

The added value of Agropolis

- Awareness of the role of a « scientific cluster » within the regional economy and for regional development: Agropolis label is a booster (visits, missions, etc.)

- Feeling of belonging for member-institutions and int’l visibility of a critical mass
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

The added value of Agropolis

- Potential of R&D opportunities at regional level: a place to be informed, a place to exchange

- Potential of R&D and business opportunities at an int’l level: relationships with the « best » worldwide, Agropolis is a HUB
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Agropolis as a PoE:

- It is a PoE *per se* due to its S&T resources and int’l recognition and networking (comparable PoE in the same fields: Davis, Wageningen)
- It is officially labelled as a national PoE «Genopole»: national government programme (2000)
- Regional support has led to the creation of a specific and internationalised «scientific cluster» on Biological Control: French, US, Australian, Brazilian organisations
2. A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

Conclusion:

- Agropolis is a scientific hub and a scientific cluster
- Agropolis is a kind of « multinational company », the only one in the region, with its subcontractors, its economic and human resources weight
- Strong international visibility/poor regional business impact
- The objectives of a National Pole of Excellence do not meet necessarily the regional expectations
A case study: from evaluation to benchmarking

What needs to be strengthened at the regional level of governance:

- Local business partnerships (due to the weakness of the local SMEs) in particular for biotechnology and agrofood sectors
- Larger involvement in EU programmes (FP5 and 6)
- Capacity of the regional governance to develop and implement its own strategic vision
- Capacity of Agropolis to promote a common strategy
- Dissemination of the results of the research (excellent int’l recognition vs. poor regional business results)

➢ Continuous Benchmarking process
3. A new challenge for regional benchmarking

Today awareness of:
(Koellreuter)

- Comparative regional data will give regions a clearer picture of their position vis à vis competing regions about possible future and attractive policies...

- Conditions of regional development will be improved through interregional comparisons of performance, processes, practices, policies and ressources and extensive use of such information
3. A new challenge for regional benchmarking

- RTDI strategies and policies are mainly decided at nat’l level, but, as previously said, regions are playing an increasing role, and the EU is supporting Networks of Excellence = Multi-level Governance is a « hot » topic

- Within this context, regional benchmarking is definitely important, in particular regarding « PoE » decided in general at nat’l level, as demonstrated through Agropolis case study
3. A new challenge for regional benchmarking

Key points:
- Benchmarking is not necessarily comparison with the «best», but with the relevant regions or areas (Koellreuter)

➢ It is the rationale of the KRELEGO project under the Strata Programme (FP5), accompanying measures: Knowledge-based Regions and Levels of Governance
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

Krelego context:

- Regions play and will play an increasingly important role in the organisational aspects of science, technology and innovation.
- Krelego region-partners have adopted a dynamic strategy regarding « poles of excellence » (biotechnologies).
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- General objective: contribute to prepare European regions to improve their competitiveness at global level through science and RDTI strategies and policies, providing them with a Europe-wide « cadre de référence » regarding relations between levels of governance.
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- Specific objective 1: initiating a think thank of policy-makers, experts, scientists, at both national and regional level in order to clearly identify the objectives of the various groups of key actors concerning RTDI in regions in front of global science and global markets and improve their collaboration.
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- Specific objective 2: a benchmarking approach relying on:
  - 6 regional case studies with benchmarking of the « politico-institutional machinery »
  - Follow-up of the implementation of the programmes of Poles of Excellence in the 6 regions
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- Specific objective 3: proposing a framework for decision-support scenarios, relying on:
  - A 3-dimensional matrix: centralised/federal state; university dominated research/national organisation-dominated research; presence/absence of an embedded culture of partnership
4. A new project to achieve results

4 benchmarks:

• Capacity of the different levels of governance to identify and define compatible and/or common objectives
• Capacity to collaborate in implementing their objectives through appropriate instruments and procedures
• Capacity to connect and valorise the different types of international networking for improving competitiveness
• Awareness of the economic impact of RTDI activities in each region
4. A new proposal/project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- Partners: Lombardia/Fondazione PTP, Oslo Business Region, BioRegio Rhein Neckar Triangle, CEPEL (CNRS research lab. – leader) for Languedoc Roussillon and Rhône-Alpes regions, Cantabria

- Lombardia is already involved in a regional benchmarking exercise in « Finance and Innovation » (Seminar oct.12. 2001) through its financial company, Finlombarda
4. A new project to achieve results, in benchmarking

- *Krelego paves the way for an EoI regarding an Integrated Project « Territorial Management of Excellence »:*

  *Priority areas: 1.7.1 « knowledge based society and social cohesion, and 1.7.2 « citizenship, democracy and new forms of governance »*