DE-LAN

LEADING DIGITAL BUSINESS
COLLABORATION ACROSS EUROPE

SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REGIONAL REPORTS

INTERREG IVC
INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

www.delanproject.eu

DE-LAN

LEADING DIGITAL BUSINESS
COLLABORATION ACROSS EUROPE

INTERREG IVC
INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention. EUR 302 million is available for project funding but, more than that, a wealth of knowledge and potential solutions are also on hand for regional policy-makers.

Table of Contents

Definition of Acronyms used in DE-LAN documents		5
1.0	Introduction	6
2.0	Presentation of the activities carried out at a regional level	7
3.0	Good practices identified and success factors of the pilot actions	9
4.0	Dissemination activities	14
5.0	Recommendations for the enhancement of regional policy	15

Report Name:	SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REGIONAL REPORTS
Publisher:	Wayne James, Welsh Government, UK
Editor:	Antonella Passani, ANCI Lazio, Italy
Authors:	This document summarises the regional reports authored by Emma Harris, Welsh Government, UK: Antonella Passani, ANCI Lazio, Italy: Andrea Vignoli, ANCI Lazio, Italy: Michela Pollone, CSP-Innovazione nelle ICT, Piemonte, Italy: Anto Recio, FUNDECYT, Extremadura, Spain: Rimantas Gatautis, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania: Radek Bejdák, Vysočina Region, Czech Republic.
Independent Reviewer:	Hervé Le Guyader

Definition of Acronyms used in DE-LAN documents

B2B: **Business to Business**

DBE: **Digital Business Ecosystem**

DE: **Digital Ecosystem**

DGE: **Digital Government Ecosystem**

DNB: **Digitally Networked Businesses**

GDP: **Gross Domestic Product**

GVA: **Gross Value Added**

ICT: **Information and Communication Technology**

IM: **Influencers Map**

MoU: **Memorandum of Understanding**

NUTS: **Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics**

PAAC: **Pilot Action Assessment Criteria**

PID: **Project Initiation Document**

RC: **Regional Catalyst**

SME: **Small and Medium-sized Enterprise**

SoA: **State of the Art**

SWOT: **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

VET: **Vocational Education and Training**

1.0 Introduction

The diffusion of ICT in all sectors of the economy offers businesses a wide range of new opportunities to connect, grow and become more competitive. In this context, Digital Ecosystems (DE) can help SMEs to enlarge their collaboration networks, to promote their products and services more widely and generally to become more innovative.

The DE-LAN (Digital Ecosystems – Learning Application Network) project is a Regional Initiative funded through the EC's INTERREG IVC programme that involved nine European regions. The nine partners who participated at the beginning of the project were:

1. Welsh Government, Wales, UK as lead partner,
2. European Regional Information Society Association (eris@), Brussels, BELGIUM,
3. Foundation Insula Barataria (FIB) , Castilla-La Mancha, SPAIN,
4. The Lazio branch of the National Association of Italian Municipalities, Lazio, ITALY,
5. CSP-Innovation in ICT, Piemonte, ITALY,
6. Foundation for the Development of Science and Technology in Extremadura (FUNDECYT), SPAIN,
7. The Technological Research Centre of Koroka, SLOVENIA,
8. Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), LITHUANIA,
9. Vysočina region, CZECH REPUBLIC.

Throughout the project, the partners shared experiences and good practices related to DE adoption and implementation. They supported the development of local DEs in their own regions by implementing several different pilot actions.

This report summarises the experiences gained from the activities carried out in the various regions, highlighting the main findings reported by each of the DE-LAN partners. It also presents some recommendations for embedding a DE strategy in regional policy.

2.0 Presentation of the activities carried out at a regional level

The first step of the DE-LAN project was the identification of good practices, as they had been experienced in the regions before the inception of the DE-LAN project. These good practices were related to Digital Ecosystems and Living Labs[1]. Overall, 13 good practices were presented and shared among the partners. Some of them consisted of online thematic networks, some of tools aimed at testing, preparing and supporting the deployment of DE at a local level and some assessed the potential benefits. Others involved online platforms for combating e-Crime, supporting training, business processes and e-Services.

Each partner subsequently identified up to three good practices to be analysed in detail. In particular, each partner chose those good practices that showed potential for having a higher impact in their own region and that were closer to the needs and potential of their territories. Study visits were organised between partners in order to develop a deeper knowledge of the good practices and to evaluate their transferability to other regions.

Then each partner decided the pilot action it wished to implement in its own region and drafted a plan for this pilot action. The Pilot Action Plans were reviewed by all partners in order to fine-tune them and to guarantee their quality before implementation was approved by the DE-LAN Steering Committee.

The second step of the DE-LAN project consisted of the implementation of the pilot actions, one for each of the territories represented. Implementing actual pilot actions allowed partners to transfer the selected good practices from another region, or sector, and to adapt them to their own local needs.

This approach was adopted as it helped identify additional good practices, benefits and possible barriers to transferring the acquired experiences. Moreover, such an approach provides evidence of how potential barriers to DE adoption can be overcome. It also demonstrates the potential impact that larger scale DE deployment might have on the regional economy.

During the development and the implementation phase of the pilot actions, 29 tools were used to assist with the planning and deployment of a DE. These tools are presented in the DE-LAN Toolkit which is available on www.delanproject.eu/downloads/tools-guides/toolkit.

The third and last step of the DE-LAN project consisted of the analysis and evaluation of the pilot actions. This allowed the partners to identify new good practices that have emerged from the pilots, any possible issues that might have occurred and the potential for new good practices in terms of transferability and sustainability.

[1] *A **Living Lab** is defined as a forum for research and innovation applied for the development of new products, services and processes. It employs working methods to integrate people as users and co-creators throughout the development process and recognises the needs of users and working conditions of service providers in their actual contexts (LILAN, 2008 - www.lilan.org/en/Living-labs-description).*

The table below summarises the aims of the pilot actions, as they were implemented by the partners.

Partner	Name	Pilot Action presentation
Wales	e-Crime European Partnership	The aim of the pilot action was to test an online environment so that the partnership could share ideas and good practices in collaboration to combat e-Crime.
Lazio	Digital Ecosystem Food, Tourism and Innovation	This pilot action was aimed at supporting better collaboration of SMEs, especially micro-companies in the agriculture/food and tourism sectors. In the province of Viterbo (Lazio region), a first step towards the creation of a value chain linking high-quality products with sustainable tourism has been taken.
Piemonte	CIR – "Consulta per gli Indirizzi di Ricerca", (Advisory Board for Research Lines and Priorities)	The Advisory Board for Research Lines and Priorities created in Piemonte region gathered about 30 bodies (R&D players and local enterprises) who worked both on a face-to-face basis and in a collaborative environment. The aim of the group was to propose future ICT research goals and a strategy to benefit SMEs.
Extremadura	Open Knowledge Transfer	This pilot action provided research institutions and final users with tools based on Open Innovation Methodologies. It also developed an exploitation model to be sustained by participating institutions through cooperation and knowledge transfer.
Lithuania	Living Lab	This pilot action aimed to facilitate the development of an internet based social game for young people by deploying a Living Lab approach: learning by doing. In particular, a Living Lab stakeholders group was established and a prototype game was conceived.
Vysočina	e-Crime Online Communication Platform	The purpose of this pilot action was to increase awareness of the growing problem of cyber crime and by, exchanging experiences, to achieve a safer business environment.

3.0 Good practices identified and success factors of the pilot actions

As previously explained, the approach used by the DE-LAN project was based on good practice transfer. By transferring existing, field-tested good practices in new environments, partners were able to identify the main barriers that had to be overcome, gain experience and develop new good practices.

In a nutshell, the partners evaluated the implementation and impact of their pilot actions focussing strongly on the transferability aspect.

The following table presents the good practices or success factors, as they were identified by the partners during the analysis of their pilot action implementation.

Wales - e-Crime European Partnership
· The use of existing good practice in the form of a platform and peer-to-peer collaboration tool previously tested by other regions in the DE-LAN partnership.
· Strong leadership from the coordinator to ensure members were active.
· Demand coming from the partnership (bottom up approach).
Lazio - Digital Ecosystem Food, Tourism and Innovation
· The engagement with key local stakeholders, leading to a public/private collaboration.
· The collaboration with CSP Piemonte and the transfer of a well tested technology.
· The good complementarity within the working group.
Piemonte - CIR – Consulta per gli Indirizzi di Ricerca
· The scalability, usability, user friendliness, openness of the cooperative environment, all of these elements that made it possible to count on a global, internally diversified community.
· The strong commitment from local innovation/research players and from SMEs.
· The bottom-up and multi-stakeholder approach to defining the research agenda.
Extremadura - Open Knowledge Transfer – "METAINNOVA"
· The methodology based on a key innovative approach (Open Innovation Methodology).
· The political support.
· A public/private collaboration.
Lithuania - Living Lab
· The cooperation and balance amongst the stakeholders involved.
· The ability to involve young people in the project.
· The attractiveness of the topic selected.

Vysočina - e-Crime Online Communication Platform
· The identified demand coming from real life situations (Cyber threats).
· The strong political support from regional decision makers.
· A unique practical case of public/private cooperation.
· The spontaneous cooperation experienced among the different stakeholders, leading to the creation of a Working Group, supported by face-by-face meetings, training for teachers and workshops.
· The vision of a better long-term sustainability of this initiative, after the creation of a collaborative platform and DE dedicated tools.

The main success factors of the Pilot Actions can be summarised according to four distinct categories:

- the development of the initiative on the basis of an existing demand, with a bottom-up approach, centred on attractive topics that make sense for the communities concerned;
- a complementary partnership, which includes a public/private cooperation, with a coordinator capable of strong leadership, ensuring real participation from the necessary stakeholders;
- an intensive collaboration with and within the main key actors, based on a multi-stakeholder approach. This is crucial in obtaining political support from local decision makers;
- an elaborated long-term sustainability plan formally agreed by the main stakeholders.

In parallel to identifying the good practices, the partners also identified the main obstacles faced while implementing the pilot actions, such as:

- delays in undertaking the activities, often linked to the necessity to adjust to the agendas of local stakeholders and SMEs;
- initial difficulties in building relationships with the end users, whose awareness or motivation needed to be boosted before they would decide to participate;
- difficulty experienced when using a tool developed by another region; sometimes, the tool had to be adapted to the new environment through interaction between the tool developer and the partner implementing the pilot action;
- difficulties within the working group, as all members were not always active at the same level, or simply not used to working together. In this case, the role of the coordinating partner was fundamental;
- difficulties caused by SMEs' characteristics: a certain resistance to add a cooperative dimension to their competitive default strategy, resistance to commit resources on a medium term basis.

Finally, each partner also identified the aspects of their pilot action that could be transferred to other regions and their future sustainability. The following table presents the aspects/elements as they were identified by each partner.

Wales - e-Crime European Partnership	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. Methodology and Templates	The main methodology used was taken from the Wales DNB project which had developed a deployment process including reporting templates to assist project consultants in their engagement with business sectors.
2. Sironta tool from FUNDECYT, Extremadura	Sironta is a peer-to-peer collaboration tool used for exchanging, creating and editing documents that require teamwork.
3. Wales DNB Demonstrator	The DNB Demonstrator is a collaborative tool that allows organisations in cluster groups to work together. The toolkit is flexible, scalable, is made up of a main platform developed using .net with a knowledge base application developed using Java and is built to industry standards. The DE platform created for the e-Crime partnership could be used by other regions subject to Welsh Government terms & conditions.
Lazio - Digital Ecosystem Food, Tourism and Innovation	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. Enlarging the experience to other SMEs of the territory	This pilot action can be transferred at different levels. A first extension would consist in transferring the pilot action to all SMEs (about 200 of them) entitled to use the Tuscia Viterbese trademark. Secondly, the pilot action could also be transferred to other Provinces in Lazio and to other sectors.
2. Validity of the model used in DE-LAN	The model used in DE-LAN, i.e. the successful transfer of a tool already developed and tested in a different region, has been shown to be a valid one. It has the potential to be replicated in other contexts.
3. The sectors involved	Another innovative aspect of this pilot action showing real potential in terms of transferability is that it provided ICT tools to sectors (agriculture and food) traditionally not aware of the benefits that can be drawn from using ICT tools and services.

Piemonte - CIR – Consulta per gli Indirizzi di Ricerca	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. CIR will carry on its activity in Piemonte	CIR has been established as a permanent body within the corporate structure of CSP. CIR will in the future identify the research priorities for CSP. Regione Piemonte will continue to fund CIR from its research activities budget.
2. Both approach and platform can be transferred	The CIR online cooperative environment is open source and modular, therefore easy to transfer. The customisation of language (if needed) and the selection of the modules will require only a limited investment.
Extremadura - Open Knowledge Transfer – "METAINNOVA"	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. Sironta tool from FUNDECYT, Extremadura	Sironta is a peer-to-peer collaboration tool used for exchanging, creating and editing documents that require teamwork.
Lithuania - Living Lab	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. Tools	The pilot action deployed several tools which were used to collect information and develop concepts that can be used by other regions and projects, such as a social game promoting entrepreneurship. Tackling in detail issues such as: what companies, what action should they take, what factors should be considered, what products should be sold by these companies, etc..
2. Cooperation intentions	In line with the developed plan, the Living Lab will be institutionalised as stakeholders involved in the pilot are expected to sign MoU's, which will pave the way for future development.
3. Integration into study programs	The Living Lab case will be integrated in university study programmes and presented to students as a successful good practice transfer case.

Vysočina - e-Crime Online Communication Platform	
Transferable Items	**Aspect/Elements**
1. Database of electronic cases	The database of electronic cases, including the list of possible threats, can be re-used by any Czech region.
2. Communication technological platform	The communication technological platform can be used by other Czech regions. Main ideas and map of the website could be transferred abroad as well (translation needed).
3. Case model for other Czech regions	The region-wide involvement of all possible stakeholders and beneficiaries may be useful for other Czech regions.

4.0 Dissemination activities

Another important part of the DE-LAN project has been the large effort made by its partners to widely disseminate information on the project and its progress. Dissemination activities were undertaken throughout the project using several methods aimed at engaging different kinds of stakeholders. Dissemination tools used included a dedicated website, regionalised brochures, half yearly local newsletters, local press releases to highlight local and European wide activities, dissemination events for key regional stakeholders, participation in conferences and face-to-face meetings with relevant players. As part of this work, a regional Influencers Map (IM) was created and maintained during the project to identify the relevant target groups in order to optimise dissemination.

The partners analysed the efficiency of their dissemination activities and made some recommendations regarding the dissemination of DE initiatives. These recommendations address:

(i) selecting the most appropriate tools to use, according to the specific target audience,

(ii) planning carefully for dissemination and information activities,

(iii) preparing the content for the dissemination messages.

In order to implement an efficient communication strategy, one of the first steps is to identify who the communication is to be targeted at and what specific result is sought. For example, is the purpose to inform or to influence opinion? Taking time at the beginning of the project to establish a detailed regional IM is very important. It is also necessary to continue to update this map as personnel change and new influencers have to be identified.

Press releases, brochures and a project website were some of the instruments used for disseminating the project's results and were considered an efficient way to inform the general public. These can be a good way to start entry-level discussions with influencers and to raise awareness of the project amongst interested stakeholders. However these activities mainly bring a general understanding of the project and, in many cases, are of a "pull" nature (one way communication), not capable of triggering much feedback. Therefore, they should be complemented by face to face meetings and other more personal types of communication.

The most successful dissemination vehicles proved to be local dissemination events and face-to-face meetings with various stakeholders. These high interactivity methods proved to be effective in identifying potential partners for pilot actions and ideas for future cooperation.

Another way to reach a wide number of key actors/stakeholders is to present the initiative by actively participating in other events that address high-level themes on topics such as innovation, SME competitiveness, digital divide reduction, etc.. These differ from local dissemination events, noted above, in both scale and by the wider knowledge that participants will gain from learning about the broader but relevant and related issues.

It is very important to work on the clarity of the message to be communicated. Communications need to be drafted from a local perspective to maximise the impact on the stakeholders of a given territory,

Finally, careful attention is required when disseminating DE topics. The theoretical model of DEs may appear too abstract to be appealing for SMEs and for public sector decision makers. Real cases and examples of practical applications are mandatory in order to communicate efficiently with stakeholders.

5.0 Recommendations for the enhancement of regional policy

One of the aims of the DE-LAN project was to ensure that the experiences developed during the project would influence local and regional policy development. In the last section of their Final Regional Reports, the partners identified existing policies, strategies and also funds available at a regional, national and at the European level. They also looked for the "right people", i.e. the ones who could locally champion DE-LAN, and the ones whose awareness of DE should be raised.

According to the partners, the relevant policies and competent stakeholders to be contacted in order to spread the DE concept are quite diverse. For example, in Lithuania, Information Society development strategy and policy are coordinated by the Ministry of Transportation and by the Ministry of Economy. At the Piemonte regional level, DE development falls within the remit of the Directorates responsible for ICT & Research and for Business. In Wales, the point of reference is the Directorate of Business Enterprise Technology and Science at the Welsh Government. In Extremadura, it is the Directorate of Science and Innovation. Some local bodies have placed ad hoc institutions in charge of ICT and supporting regional decision making process, such as Lazio S.p.a. in Lazio, whilst in Vysočina, the ICT safety issues are addressed by the Region's Presidency.

In all of the territories involved in the DE-LAN project, national and local strategies related to DE topics are currently being prepared and/or implemented. For example, the Piemonte region is currently establishing 12 regional thematic Innovation Poles, composed of clusters of SMEs and R&D players; in the Vysočina region, an e-safety policy will be implemented by 2013 and the e-Crime group will, accordingly, prepare the safety standards for the target groups for that date; in Wales, the current policy is "Delivering a Digital Wales" and the Digital Wales Advisory Network of experts provide regular advice on its focus and key priorities; while Extremadura is actively working on their Regional Plan for Research, Technological Development and Innovation. These are only some examples of the strategies identified by the partners in their Final Regional Reports.

In order to influence these regional strategies, the DE-LAN partners identified who the main influencers and who the "regional champions" were. The DE-LAN partners contacted and got a high number of these persons and corresponding institutions on board during the development of the DE-LAN project. Most of these are local bodies, SMEs, associations, universities and research centres, regional agencies in charge of ICT policies, educational bodies, Chambers of Commerce and large ICT companies.

It could be said that, thanks to the DE-LAN project, the Digital Ecosystems approach is now recognised at the local level. In some regions, DEs are already part of regional policies but clearly more still needs to be done. It is therefore critical to use the regional champions who have been identified, in order to influence policy makers and to promote the development of DEs.

To maximise the efficiency of engagement with these regional champions the dissemination and communication strategies should be based on local good practices and use concrete examples developed throughout the DE-LAN project.

DE-LAN

www.delanproject.eu

INTERREG IVC

INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

European Union

European Regional Development Fund