GABROVO COMMITMENT TO BECOME GREEN, SMART AND INNOVATIVE

Workshop for Building Synergies for Successful Green and Digital Transition – the Way Ahead in the context of the Knowledge Exchange Platform (KEP)

22 June 2022

Organisers: European Committee of the Regions & DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission
GABROVO REGION
LOCATION AND GENERAL FACTS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (2020)</td>
<td>106 193</td>
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<td>Teritory (sq. km)</td>
<td>2 023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of settlements</td>
<td>349</td>
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<td>Share of urban population</td>
<td>79.9</td>
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# GABROVO REGION
## LOCATION AND GENERAL FACTS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
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<td>Income and Living Standard</td>
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<td>Labor Market</td>
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<td>Investment and Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Local Taxes</td>
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<td>Administration</td>
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### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>Healthcare</td>
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<td>Public Order and Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
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GABROVO REGION

KEY FACTS

Mechatronics and ICT are the leading sectors in Gabrovo in terms of productivity and added value per employee.

The industry of Gabrovo is strongly export-oriented – over 50% of the production is intended for foreign markets.

The GDP per capita in Gabrovo district reached BGN 14,651 in 2020, and according to this indicator Gabrovo I clearly on the first place in the North Central Region.

The share of Gabrovo industry positions the district at the first place in the North Central Region for 2020.

Gabrovo industry represents 42% of the gross added value which is the highest in the North Central Region.
The study of the innovative potential of Gabrovo in the field of industry shows that the destination is preferred because of the access to engineering talent and traditional cluster connections in mechanical engineering. Gabrovo has established itself as a hub for engineering solutions, as most of the companies offer complex solutions - from engineering to a finished product.

One of the strengths of Gabrovo is the proactive local self-governments with multiple successes and pilot initiatives.

On a district level Gabrovo has one of the highest amounts of EU funds absorption per capita in the country.
GABROVO
Innovation Ecosystem

- Programmes & Projects
- Innovative SMEs
- R&D
- Clusters
- Business NGOs
- Regional and local governments
- Regional Innovation Center
- Partnerships
- Technical university
- Technology park
GABROVO REGION
Innovation Ecosystem

KNOW-HUB Interreg IVC – development of Gabrovo Innovation plan (GIP) 2014 – 2020

The objective of GIP – to stimulate R&D and innovation activities in companies, to establish and coordinate a network for innovations among sub-regional innovation stakeholders with proactive participation of TU – Gabrovo and to establish a sound monitoring system of the regional innovation policy.
GABROVO REGION
Innovation Ecosystem

ESSPO Interreg Europe – Analysis of Gabrovo Innovation Ecosystem

The project aims to contribute to the creation of effective and efficient SME support service portfolios, which are capable to impact the regional economies via increasing SME's competitiveness, especially focusing on their growth on national and international markets as well as on their improved engagement in innovation processes.
Incipient stage of Gabrovo innovation ecosystem and need for intermediary organization in support to R&D.

Need for cultivation of innovation culture in all stakeholders as well as better cooperation among available R&I actors.

Need for reinforcement and promotion of technology transfer.

As that moment only informal structures exist. It was encouraged to promote cooperation between clusters and innovation networks as they generate high-quality competitive advantages with long-term impact on sustainable regional development.

Identified educational gaps which needed serious attention, especially the demand for qualified human resources. It was recommended to work for building strong connections among universities and companies with the purpose to adapt the training programmes to the company’s needs, and also increase the innovation knowledge and capabilities.

Low capacity of the companies for designing and implementing innovation projects.
GABROVO REGION
Innovation Ecosystem

Gabrovo Innovation Camps and other business and innovation events

Quadruple helix approach and analysis of the need to establish Innovation center/hub/club
GABROVO REGION
Innovation Ecosystem

Participation in the project RIS3 in Lagging Regions of JRC

provided concrete support to the implementation of RIS3s in selected low-growth and less developed regions in EU member states and support to develop a cross-cutting approach to key issues regarding growth and governance in those regions.
GABROVO REGION
Innovation Ecosystem

Consolidation of the regional efforts and the establishment of Regional Innovation Center (RIC) Ambitious Gabrovo

http://ric-gabrovo.com

The objective is to foster innovations with focus on four main directions: Incubator for talents, Devices for automation, New materials & Technologies & Circular economy. It supports the development of sustainable R&I open ecosystem through efficient partnership among business, academia and LRAs, provides innovation capacity building for the business, start-ups/accelerators support, contributes to the development of innovative and technological culture, identifies, attracts and supports young talents/innovators/entrepreneurs.
RIC submitted an application for the establishment of European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH)

Unfortunately, the application received only a Seal of Excellence!
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Innovation Ecosystem

Participation in TERRITORIA project funded by Horizon 2020 and development of Gabrovo Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021 – 2027

TERRITORIA project helped to introduce the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles in Gabrovo in order to make regional research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem more inclusive
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Gabrovo Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021 – 2027 – state of play

Industry and innovation

Promoting the development of the local and regional economy, with a focus on high-tech production and knowledge-intensive services, investment in technical and business infrastructure and improving the innovation environment

Assessment of the change in the value chains

and the potential for development of companies after the changes in the supply chains, due to the pandemic and the deep recession
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Gabrovo Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021 – 2027 – state of play

Science and education

cooperation of local business with educational institutions, with a focus on training and attracting staff, investment in scientific infrastructure and technology transfer, close cooperation between public science and technology units and local companies

Green & Digital

going through the green & digital transformation of the industry, development of Gabrovo as smart and green region, improving business management processes and strengthening the importance of partnership approach for sustainable development purposes
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Community involvement and awareness raising

Two conferences “Science meets regions” were organized in Gabrovo with large participation of experts from European Commission, JRC, other international partners, researchers, academia and regional stakeholders

European Industry Days

Business meets Politicians

6 editions of Gabrovo Innovation Camp
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Recognitions and achievements

Green Leaf Award of the EC for 2021
EER region

Part of the mission 100 climate neutral and smart cities
In the context of the European Green Deal and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Smart Specialization Strategies (S3) are facing a transition towards strategies in which sustainability & inclusivity are at the core, setting the frame of S4+.

There is URGENCY to address climate change while leaving no one behind!

The strategic goal is to achieve EU competitiveness through sustainability!

New and central role of INNOVATIONS in order to create solutions to the societal challenges!

Partnerships for Regional Innovations pilot action (PRI) – joint initiative of CoR, JRC and EU Commission.

The participants in the pilot project will explore the new Partnerships for Regional Innovation based on the ‘Partnerships for Regional Innovation Playbook’, an initial guidance document published 17/05/2022 by the Joint Research Centre.
A core element of the proposed approach is the introduction of local missions to coordinate actions under a coherent directional logic, enabling the exploration of broad-ranging policy mixes for system-level innovation.

The Partnerships are rooted in the upcoming new Innovation Agenda for Europe to help integrate initiatives and investment at EU and national levels. It is an effort directly targeted to improve Innovation ecosystems as one essential area to boost Europe’s innovation performance. The key objective is to strengthen interconnection of regional and local innovation ecosystems and to reinforce European sustainable value chains and deep-tech sectors.
During the Pilot Action, the participants will test these policy tools while co-creating operational guidance. The commitment is to:

- Identify how governance can better respond to the challenges identified at the regional level and mobilise resources that deliver on the needs of the citizens.
- Participate (together with other regions, cities and member states) in the elaboration of a new strategic approach for innovation-driven territorial transformation linking EU priorities with national plans and place-based opportunities and challenges.
- Establish partnerships with impact on sustainability transitions that create economic, social and environmental values.
- Bring more directionality of the efforts of regions and the EU in the process of moving towards a digital and green transition.
- Reduce the high degree of fragmentation in the management of cohesion and recovery funds and projects.
- Improve the management of regional resources that could be mobilized to implement the overall innovation strategy at regional level.
Outcomes:

- Evolution of 3S into smart specialization strategies for sustainable and inclusive growth S4+
- Reinforcement of the regional innovation systems using PRIs toolbox
- Establishment of new local/regional structures like the ERA hubs, EDIHs in the pilot PRI regions
- PRI awarded regions should be singled out as "front-runners" at the European level – similar to the EU Missions, in order for the Member State authorities to quickly roll out projects
- Create a database/platform of the regions, participating in the pilot, where the regions could also update the information about themselves and launch new bottom-up initiatives.
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Gabrovo commitment to become green, smart and innovative

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Tanya HRISTOVA
Mayor of Gabrovo municipality