

Developing an Innovation Plan in the Ripoll River Basin

Sabadell (Catalonia-Spain)

Analytical Case Study



Name of URBACT Project concerned: ESIMEC

Date: December 2010

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Under the strategic framework of the Catalan Agency of Innovation and Internationalization (ACC10), the municipalities located in the Ripoll River Basin (Sabadell, Barberà del Vallès, Castellar del Vallès, Polinyà, Sant Quirze del Vallès i Santa Perpètua de la Mogoda) agreed to develop an Innovation Plan for the territory.</p> <p>The main objective of the project was to identify the strengths of Sabadell and its surrounding area from an economic and business perspective. The project would identify the economic drivers capable of transforming the economy into a more dynamic, innovative and competitive one. Another key objective is the positioning of the territory at international level - inward investment and encouraging internationalisation are therefore strategic aims within the project.</p> <p>The project was designed at the end of 2006 and started at the end of 2007. From then to 2009 the analysis process took place. This constituted a deep analysis of the business structure in the area through interviews with almost 1000 companies which led to the identification of the most innovative practices in the territory. After evaluating all the information five clusters were considered to be capable to lead the innovation system in the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health, ○ Food and food auxiliary services, ○ Logistics network, ○ Environment and ○ Fashion. <p>Partnership working with the municipalities and guidance from ACC10 concluded that the Food and food auxiliary services and Health clusters were the more competitive of these. Due to their characteristics these sectors were considered capable of enhancing innovation and the knowledge economy, had potential to create new jobs and, as a consequence, help lead the innovation system in this area. Figures related to the number of companies, annual turnover, number of employees and future evolution of these markets gave further reason to support them.</p> <p>After this process, 2 visits were made to regions with similar clusters - one to each cluster. A delegation of representatives from the Ripoll River Basin municipalities had the opportunity to identify the best practices developed in these regions which were working in similar clusters, and have gone one stage further. In the case of the food cluster, the exchange was made in Oresund region (Denmark, Sweden) in 2008. The Health cluster project visited a cluster in the Medecon Ruhr, North Rhine Westphalia in 2009,</p> <p>Following this a Cluster Manager position was created and a new Innovation Association entity is planned so that financial support from the public administration will gradually decrease and eventually disappear. For now institutional support is maintained. Currently, Sabadell and the rest of the partners are working on the implementation phase where they are working closely with the food and health clusters.</p> <p>The first concrete results are starting to appear, as some companies from both clusters have agreed to collaborate with research centres and universities. In addition company to company collaboration is starting to increase. These are</p>
------------------------	---

considered to be the first seeds of enhanced competitiveness in the territory.

Basic description of the background and setting	
Summary	<p>During 2008 the municipalities located in the Ripoll River Basin (Sabadell, Barberà del Vallès, Castellar del Vallès, Polinyà, Sant Quirze del Vallès i Santa Perpètua de la Mogoda) agreed to develop an Innovation Plan for the territory. This case study provides information on the process through which the plan was developed and gives some information on emerging results and impact.</p>
Challenges that the practice addresses	<p><i>What is the real problem, need or challenge that the practice addresses?</i></p> <p>Sabadell city and the rest of the municipalities in the Ripoll River Basin have developed strategic policies and specific actions targeting innovation in order to improve their productive sector during recent years. However, there was not a holistic and strategic policy on innovation for the whole territory, so these local and municipal actions had a weaker impact. Therefore, the main challenge of this practice was to put together all the common assets of the municipalities related to the innovation system in order to coordinate them and to provide a holistic response to future changes.</p> <p>Improving innovation in this region will permit to tackle other interconnected challenges such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Internationalization: innovative products and services are the basis to being successful in international markets. Competitiveness and improvement of these products in order to sell them internationally is a major objective of the Plan. Companies offering their products and services abroad have a bigger market than those depending on the domestic market and they, therefore reduce their risk in the case of an economic downturn or lack of demand. Internationalization is a challenge because in an economy made up of a large number of SME's, such as Sabadell, companies struggle to export their products and services due to a lack of economic and personnel capacity. Internationalization is a mid term strategy, but results are needed immediately. Poor experience in internationalization processes and a lack of skills such as languages etc. makes it even more difficult to sell their products and services to foreign markets. - Connecting workforce development to innovation needs is another challenge. New demands from companies must be detected early. Better lines of communication must therefore be established and better early warning systems must be designed between companies, administrations and educational centres. <p>Improving competitiveness means adapting the economy and the business sector to a wide range of facts that change constantly Sabadell has been and still is a flagship for the economy of Catalonia. Nevertheless an improvement in its competitiveness was needed to face the above challenges.</p>
The Context	<p><i>What are the specific features of the context that have shaped the practice?</i></p> <p>Sabadell is located 20km north west of Barcelona in Spain and has a population of 207,645. Like many cities it has experienced a decline in traditional manufacturing industry (particularly textiles) and a rise in the services sector in the last few years.</p> <p>There are 5,790 companies of which 87% have less than 10 employees. The Service sector is now the main employer and accounts for 74% of the companies in Sabadell. 13% of companies are industrial and 13 % manufacturing. 20% of the total workforce is self employed although this has fallen in the last 2 years.</p> <p>There are 6 municipalities in the Ripoll River Basin and Sabadell is the largest city. Its influence in driving the area's Innovation Plan forward has been crucial.</p> <p>During the European Council of March 2001, the European Commission encouraged Member States to coordinate their regional innovation strategies to</p>

	<p>further the overall aims of EU level Innovation Policy. The recommendation was to create Regional Innovation Plans in order to enhance the productive sector and empower sectors related to knowledge economy. In this context, the Catalan government created the Innovation Plan of Catalonia 2001-2004, followed by the Research and Innovation Plan 2005-2008.</p> <p>At the same time the socioeconomic reports in Sabadell showed that the volume of high and medium technological industry and services there is above the regional and national average. The sectors in question are machinery, mechanical equipment and related services sectors linked to the knowledge economy (such as financial brokerage and health activities). 47.4% of employees of the city are employed in these strategic sectors compared to 40.6% at regional level.</p> <p>Taking on board the drive at EU level and the conditions locally, Sabadell started to look at innovation strategy and immediately recognised a lack of any common innovation strategy among Sabadell and its neighbours. There was also little information and knowledge about which were the most innovative business sectors in the area and their company needs. Sabadell City Council therefore committed to improve the competitiveness of the economic activity of the city as well as its integration in the territory. More specifically, these weaknesses were outlined in the Local Agreement of Sabadell (formed by the main municipal entities of a political, economic, social and educational nature).</p> <p>In response to this, the stakeholders of the Local Agreement of Sabadell city, agreed to develop an Innovation Plan to create an integrated innovation system not only for Sabadell, but for all the municipalities which share one of the most important economic areas of Catalonia: the Ripoll River Basin.</p> <p>The sociopolitical structure of Catalonia is a complex map of multilevel governance (governments at regional, county, supracounty and local level). Several clusters have been identified in the territory; all of them have their own characteristics and act as an economic driver for different economic sectors. Observing this complex reality of the country, the Catalan government has opted to a bottom-up innovation policy, working at the closest local level in order to involve all the potential local agents which deal with innovation processes. Paradoxically this bottom-up approach makes it even more difficult to plan, execute and control the innovation policy which sit coherently between European, Regional and local level.</p> <p>The Innovation Plan was built in the context of a lack of common innovation strategies among Sabadell and its neighbours and an under developed idea of the business structure and company's innovation needs in the area. These weaknesses were outlined in the Local pact of Sabadell (formed by main entities of the municipality) which recommended the development of an Innovation Plan to identify the highest value productive chains.</p>
<p>Aims and objectives</p>	<p><i>What are the key aims of the practice and in what way do they contribute or add something to existing approaches? The objectives form the essential link between identification of real problems/challenges to be addressed and evaluation of results.</i></p> <p>The main objective of the project was to identify the strengths of Sabadell and its surrounding area from an economic and business perspective. The project would identify the economic drivers capable of transforming the economy into a more dynamic, innovative and competitive one. Another key objective is the positioning of the territory at international level – attracting inward investment and encouraging internationalization are therefore strategic aims within the project.</p> <p>More specifically the Innovation Plan of Ripoll River Basin focuses on the following 3 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To set up the conditions to drive the economy into the knowledge economy

	<p>through a strong policy on ICT technologies and on Research and Investigation. To develop a structural review of the processes to encourage innovation and competitiveness of the main economic drivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To contribute to the modernization of the productive system through investment in Human Capital and promotion of entrepreneurial spirit. These elements will follow from a sustainable economic development and social cohesion of the country. - To promote adequate coordination among the research and innovation system stakeholders. This partnership working methodology is a prerequisite of success in this field. Public private collaboration is a key success factor in achieving the Plan targets.
<p>Social innovation</p>	<p><i>In what way(s) was this practice new (in the city, in the Member State, in the world)?</i></p> <p>The project presented is innovative in 3 senses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The project is innovative itself because it uses ACC10 (Catalan innovation department) cluster methodology. , a bottom-up innovation policy, working at the closest local level in order to involve all the potential local agents which deal with innovation processes. 2. The project incorporates an element of territorial cooperation among the different municipalities of the area. For the first time in the region, this project has brought together different perspectives on innovation policies. Far from creating barriers, these different approaches have contributed to strengthening the weak points in the regional research and innovation system; filling the gaps with the strong points of every partner. 3. Finally this is the first initiative in Sabadell that aims to put business, public administration, research centres and civil society together.

<p>Case: Concise description and explanation of the practice</p>	
<p>Main components or parts of the practice</p>	<p><i>What are the key components or elements of the practice?</i></p> <p>A first key element has been the capacity to involve different municipalities in a project with mid-long term results. Sabadell played the lead role in an inclusive way and had the ability to engage different municipalities in the area. This has added real value to the innovation plan.</p> <p>A second key component has been the exhaustive identification and analysis process. Several activities were carried out in order to identify the main strengths of the territory and to work on the main economic drivers in Sabadell and its area. These activities were carried out from an Innovation and Business approach. A thousand companies with more than 3 M€ turnover were analysed and the main agents related to the innovation System were identified.</p> <p>After this analysis the information was used to define the most dynamic business sectors. The main criteria used were the number of companies, annual turnover, number of employees and future evolution.</p> <p>As a result, a large number of companies related to the health and food sector presented a high impact on Sabadell's area economy as well as an important connection to innovation stakeholders that could provide them with the tools to become major economic drivers of the territory.</p> <p>Finally, an important step was taken with the contract of the cluster manager. This has been a key element from the point of view of companies' cooperation and project development.</p>

<p>Timing - Start and duration</p>	<p><i>When was the action started and what sparked it off? When did it end? Or is it still ongoing?</i></p> <p>The project was designed at the end of 2006 and started at the end of 2007. From then to 2009 the analysis process took place. A Cluster Manager is now in post and an Association is planned, to take over as public support is reduced. Currently, Sabadell and the rest of the partners are working on the implementation phase where they are working closely with the food and health clusters. Self management of the clusters is expected in the next few years.</p>
<p>Process - Development over time</p>	<p><i>What were the key stages of implementation?</i></p> <p><u>First phase (2007-2008)</u> An engagement of the partners on behalf of the leader was carried out. During this period first steps were taken to involve the rest of the municipalities of the area. Under the Sabadell lead, the municipalities were convinced to take part in the project, despite being a mid-long term project. After setting up the project partnership, the actions focused on identifying the main clusters in the region. Actors representing these clusters were also identified in order to set up ways to coordinate them. Once all the information was evaluated, five clusters were considered to be capable of leading the innovation system in the areas of: Health, Food and food auxiliary services, logistics network, Environment and fashion.</p> <p>Partnership working with the municipalities and guidance from ACC10 concluded that Food and food auxiliary services and Health clusters offered the greatest potential.</p> <p><u>Second phase (2008-2009)</u> From the end of 2008 and during 2009, partnership working among the municipalities of the Innovation Plan was increased. Terrassa (co-capital of the county together with Sabadell) joined the health cluster project and the Strategic Committee was officially constituted.</p> <p>One of the aims that must be highlighted was the dissemination action carried out towards the companies showing them the benefits of the cluster methodology and encouraging them to participate in the cluster project activities. Key stakeholders were interviewed and had many options to participate in the project.</p> <p>In parallel, the analysis process was continued through benchmarking visits in Denmark and Sweden (food cluster) and Germany (health cluster) to learn from similar experiences.</p> <p><u>Third phase (2010-2011)</u> Working plan 2010 followed the ACC10 strategy. This includes a reorganization of the "Territorial Innovation Systems" in Catalonia with the aim of improving the competitiveness, identifying the actors participating in the innovation process, and connecting the Technological hubs to strategic development plans.</p> <p>In practical terms, In the case of food and health clusters in Sabadell, this includes coordinated actions with other business related clusters in Catalonia. In addition, during 2010 the role of cluster manager was introduced. This role has increased cooperation among the clustered companies and research agents. The first concrete projects have been kicked off in order to improve products through coordinated investigation with research centres.</p>
<p>Overcoming challenges</p>	<p><i>What were the set backs and obstacles faced? How were they overcome?</i></p> <p>The Innovation Plan project has been carried out during 4 years up to now and is still on going. Several obstacles have been overcome during these years and some are still to be tackled.</p> <p>Some of the main challenges have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership working: At the early stages of the project the big challenge for Sabadell, as lead partner, was to ensure participation of the rest of the

	<p>municipalities of the area. The main obstacles facing this challenge were the different roles to be taken by these cities. Sabadell led the action, but some of the municipalities wanted to introduce actions according to their point of view. Thanks to the political and strategic responsibility on all parts, these challenges were solved through an inclusive leadership by Sabadell and a close cooperation of the rest of the partners. Apart from the early stages, another crucial step was taken from the end of 2008 and during 2009, when partnership working among the municipalities of the Innovation Plan was increased. Terrassa (co-capital of the county together with Sabadell) joined the health cluster project and the Strategic Committee was officially constituted. The Strategic Committee is formed by elected member and represents the importance of the plan for the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business engagement has been an important challenge for the Innovation Plan. The municipalities faced problems involving the private sector in a project where results were expected in the mid-long term. A great effort was made to explain the strategic value of the project and the importance of the plan in a long term view rather than focusing on immediate results. Interviews, individual meetings, communication and political support were some of the tools used to overcome these obstacles. Although the project is yet to be finalised, the fact that first results are emerging has been very important in terms of increasing business involvement. First concrete projects between companies and research centers are attracting the attention of companies that are not yet involved in the cluster and increasing confidence of those already participating in the project. We believe that the potential success of these projects will drive the cluster projects in the right way. Concrete results coming out of the project is one of the most crucial steps to success. - Currently, the challenge that the project is facing is the formalization of the clusters into Associations that are self-funded and self-governed. Public administration will just support them in an institutional way in the future. Funding is the main obstacle to be solved, as in the current economic context is difficult to convince the companies to pay for the cluster activities.
<p>Transnationality</p>	<p><i>How did the actors use transnational exchange to develop the <u>practice</u>?</i></p> <p>In the case of the Innovation Plan of Sabadell and its area, transnational exchange was a very valuable practice.</p> <p>2 visits were made to regions with similarities, one for each cluster. Thanks to that, a delegation of representatives from the Ripoll River Basin municipalities could identify the best practices developed in these regions which were working in similar clusters, but had gone to the next stage.</p> <p>In the case of the food cluster, the exchange was made in Oresund region (Denmark, Sweden) in 2008. The main features of this exchange were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 400 companies related to food industry. Some of them with a high innovation level. - An overall turnover of 7500 € million - Highly reputed innovation agents linked to the cluster (Lund University) - Creation of the øresund food platform that acts as networking generator in the cluster. <p>The health cluster project included a visit to cluster Medecon Ruhr, at land of North Rhine Westphalia, (Germany) in 2009. The main features in this exchange activity were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The region has 300,000 companies related to the health sector and different Hospitals which work in cooperation with universities. - Incomes of the cluster are 1/3 provided by public administration (high support on RD policies) - Identification of key companies which lead the cooperation projects (SME's with high innovation profile).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of the leading companies, hospital, insurance companies, research centers, universities and local and regional public administration - Networking methodology used as a way to identify interesting areas and to build confidence among partners. <p>The exchange visit to Germany provided the Innovation Plan with a clear idea of how the health cluster in Ripoll River Basin should work. Good examples and new fresh ideas were exported from this exchange activity for local implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The aim was to act as a flagship at regional level and to put together all health projects under the same framework. - Specialisation as a key element in order to complement other health related clusters in Catalonia and therefore become a point of reference in the health sector. - To achieve a greater support from public administration. - Finding new projects matching new demands (E.g..new diseases) with new technology capacities.
Key actors	
Main actors involved	<p><i>Who had the idea? Who were the main players behind the action?</i></p> <p>The original idea was put forward by the Local agreement of Sabadell, influenced by the context of the recommendations of the European Commission, recollected by the Catalan Agency ACC10.</p> <p>This project is developed under the strategic lines established by different institutions at different political levels. From the strategic lines set up by the Catalan government through the innovation and internationalization Agency ACC10 (Regional Innovation Systems strategic line) to the prior actions established by the Barcelona Provincial Government (Support to the activities to dynamise strategic sectors).</p> <p>In addition, from a local perspective, a group composed by the main Sabadell stakeholders, called the “Local pact of Sabadell” , decided to set up a strategy on innovation policy which called for an Innovation Plan. ACC10 is one of the main actors involved in the project. It plays a mentor role to the project, as the agency responsible for setting up the lines to be followed in the innovation field. Furthermore, it is the major funding entity of the project, so their recommendations and guidance have been crucial.</p> <p>On the other hand, it must be said that the project couldn't have succeeded without partnership collaboration between the municipalities of the Ripoll River Basin: Barberà del Vallès, Castellar del Vallès. Polinyà, Sant Quirze del Vallès i Santa Perpètua de la Mogoda. These have all added value to this project.</p> <p>In Sabadell the involvement of all the stakeholders started from the very beginning, as the Local Agreement of the city is formed by political, economic and social entities. Furthermore, the agreements with UAB university, ESADE business school and Leitat research center contribute to the dissemination of Innovation plan activities and to promote collaborations between these partners and the companies involved in the selected clusters.</p> <p>In addition, the Local Agreement of Sabadell ensures the involvement of the private sector as meetings take place every few months. The aim of the meetings, are among others, to communicate the Innovation Plan activities to the trade associations which are part of the Local Agreement.</p> <p>As part of its accountability actions are also targeted toward the local stakeholders; civil society is involved in the communication of the activities of the Innovation Plan. A plenary reunion on Innovation activities takes place every year held by the council of the city.</p>
Coordination mechanisms	<p><i>What was the dynamic between the actors? How did they coordinate the action?</i></p> <p>The Innovation Plan of the Ripoll River Basin has been coordinated through two channels:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Strategic committee: A Strategic coordination driven by elected representatives or high profile technicians which have defined main criteria of the project and made institutional arrangements. They meet twice a year and their good coordination has been transferred to the technician level. - Secondly a Technical coordination which has solved concrete problems and monitored the baseline study and interviews to different companies. Permanent contact and constant meetings between the municipalities at technical level are considered to be one of the success factors of the project.
Participation	<p><i>How were the residents or users (or target groups) involved in the action?</i></p> <p>The participation in the action of the target groups (companies, universities, research centres and municipalities) have been developed through meetings, focus groups, interviews etc.</p> <p>In 2009 the following events were delivered for the Food cluster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the summer 2009 two working groups discussed potential projects that were interesting to work with. 17 companies participated on these seminars. - On October 2009, the Strategic Committee was officially constituted and the conclusions of the previous studies of the food cluster were presented as well as the working plan. This event was open to all companies and entities related to the food sector. <p>On November 2009, a seminar was held in order to disseminate the working lines which research centres were working with. 38 companies participated in this event.</p>
Supporting programmes and funding sources	
Total cost and Sources of funding	<p><i>What was the total funding and how was this broken down? (sometimes this will be over several funding cycles)</i></p> <p>490.000€ has been the total funding of the Innovation Plan of Ripoll River Basin. Although this was split over several funding cycles.</p>
EU financial contribution	<p>Include details of co-financing: ERDF, ESF other EU and co-financing, sources of national co-financing, etc</p> <p>The average cofinancing has been 50%. This rate may vary along the 4 years of the project. Co-funding came from the Catalan Agency of Innovation (ACC10).</p>
Annual budget in Euro	<p><i>What was the annual budget (in the case of revenue projects)?</i></p> <p>As outlined above, the amount of budget has varied during the project. In the current year a 100.000€ budget is available. Next year the budget will be 100% funded by the partners of the project and the companies involved in it.</p>
Immediate and lasting results	
Overall impact	<p><i>What was the overall impact on the original goal of the project and its specific objectives? What was the added value in terms of improvements over the original starting situation?</i></p> <p>The Innovation Plan of Ripoll River Basin has had a positive impact in the territory economy. After a few years of implementation, the first concrete results are starting to happen.</p> <p>The Innovation Plan has established the foundations for an Innovation System in the region. But an Innovation System is something more than a triple helix collaboration and impact can not only be measured taking into account IRD expenditures, number of patents, number of spin offs or risk capital and investment amounts. We can call the above factors “hard” factors, frequently promoted directly by the public sector and that settle down the structure of the System.</p> <p>Beyond this, an Innovation System is related to a “changing spirit or culture”. Unfortunately this spirit is extremely difficult to measure objectively. It is fair to say</p>

	<p>that the Innovation Plan has encouraged this changing view and has promoted the environmental conditions in Sabadell and its area in order to settle an effective Innovation System. These “soft” values are not only difficult to measure, but also to achieve. In the case of Sabadell and its area, “soft” factors such as leadership, value system, skilled workforce, network methodology etc. have started to improve and contribute to the sustainability of the project.</p> <p>The main goal of the project has been as the 2 economic drivers identified in the first phase (health and food clusters) are the flagships of the Ripoll River Basin future economy.</p> <p>The impact on human Capital is yet to be measured. Municipalities involved in the project are working to improve workforce skills to satisfy business demand. In the case of Sabadell, bilateral project such as ESIMeC Urbact II project will help to deal with demand led workforce development and to achieve skills needed for a knowledge economy with constant innovation processes. Moreover, agreements between administration and universities such as UAB (Autonomous University of Barcelona), research centers such LEITAT as well as ESADE business school, or UAB Research Park will provide the skills needed to tackle new challenges for the companies involved in the clusters.</p> <p>Regarding the third objective, the first concrete results are tangible now, as some companies from both clusters have agreed to collaborate with research centres and universities. In addition company to company collaboration has started to rise. In conclusion, it can be said that the project has made an impact in the way that the public and private sector interacts, bringing them together along with universities and research centres.</p>
Beneficiaries	<p><i>Who are the main beneficiaries of the project?</i></p> <p>Companies involved in the Food and Health clusters in any part of their productive chain as well as universities and research centres. Moreover, the whole territory will benefit from this Innovation Plan as it focuses on fostering competitiveness in the area.</p>
Concrete results	<p><i>What was the impact on monitoring indicators linked to objectives?</i></p> <p>The overall impact foreseen in the project was the increase of innovation processes in companies. The Innovation Plan has delivered 2 main projects: health and food cluster. Nevertheless, those are projects still ongoing and it is very difficult to obtain monitoring indicators. Therefore, the results that will be explained are still variable and can be increased and improved in the next months.</p> <p>Some projects between companies university and research centers have started:</p> <p>Regarding the food and food packaging cluster, 20 companies have been involved in various projects divided in 10 thematic priorities. These projects have come up during the last semester of 2010 coinciding with the work done by the cluster manager.</p> <p>Regarding the Health cluster, several meetings between pharmaceutical companies and cosmetic companies have been carried out. Arising from these meetings potential projects are being studied in the area of “cosmoceuticals” or “functional cosmetics” (Cosmetic products with therapeutical functions).</p> <p>Examples of results in the Food Cluster include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving quality and delivery terms in small suppliers for manufacturing companies: 4 manufacturing companies and 7 suppliers involved. This is collaborative project among companies with a monitoring and training help of a technological centre. 2. Salt reduction in prepared-ready meals: 4 companies in the food business involved. Collaborative project. The cluster provides success cases and follows up the whole project. 3. Traceability from point of sale (restaurants, hotels) backwards to distributors: most food companies sell their products through distributors that have a total control of POS and make invisible for food companies to trace their products to end users. 2 companies involved. It is open to other companies in the cluster to

	<p>join at this stage.</p> <p>4. Packaging: 4 companies involved and a research centre. Developing new packaging for pasta products. Collaborative projects. Closed to other companies.</p> <p>For most of our companies this is the first time they can discuss together their needs and their innovation objectives. The cluster gives them the chance to openly meet other companies and share their objectives. Companies become more involved when they have evidence that their can reach agreements with other companies towards the same objectives.</p>
<p>Impact on governance</p>	<p><i>How has the action changed the way things are done in the city?</i></p> <p>It is fair to say that the Innovation Plan, due to its methodology, has set a precedent on the local policy of Sabadell. Partnership working in Innovation policies has been a difficult task to tackle, but the experience has shown that the results are consistent and it is worthwhile to share efforts towards a common goal for the region.</p> <p>At local level one of the main impacts on governance has been on the communication methodology. During this project, a permanent communication methodology has been established. Through the Local agreement meeting, the local entities have received information on the results and milestones of the project. It is a strategy that is meant to be transferred to other projects carried out by the municipality.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Innovation Plan has shown that in Economic strategies and policies partnership working is a must. Local public administration boundaries make no sense in a project which aims to tackle business competitiveness: companies work beyond these borders.</p> <p>Multilevel governance has also been present in the project as ACC10 strategy and lines had to be followed, so local policies from the municipalities had to be adapted to their needs.</p>
<p>Lessons to be learnt</p>	
<p>Success factors</p>	<p><i>What were the key factors that led to success?</i></p> <p>Some of the success factors that led the Innovation Plan to achieve the objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership: This role it has been played by Sabadell municipality. Previous contacts with ACC10 in order to obtain funds and the capacity to engage different municipalities around the area, drove the innovation plan to success from its beginning. - Implication at technical level: Permanent contact and coordination between the technicians responsible for the project have been a key factor. Sharing information and solving barriers have been the main tasks of this group. - Patience: Mid-long term objectives were a risk for the project. Frequently, immediate results and visibility are seen as the most important elements at Political level to support a project. In this case, long term work has been appreciated and it is been understood that the Innovation Plan of Ripoll River Basin is a holistic plan that needs time and a lot of foundation work to succeed.
<p>Barriers, bottlenecks and challenges</p>	<p><i>What obstacles were encountered, what pitfalls are to be avoided, what are the ongoing difficulties?</i></p> <p>Main obstacles that were encountered are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding: It is being a problem throughout the project and is still a problem. Regional public administration, through ACC10, provided an average of 50% funding. Nevertheless it is has been a problem to support the rest of the budget with the municipalities' own resources. - Involvement of the partners in a long term project: as it has been said, the innovation plan didn't offer an immediate visibility and this represented a

	barrier to engage the partners.
Future issues	<p><i>What issues are still unresolved?</i></p> <p>The main issue which is still unresolved is the future funding of cluster actions. It is foreseen that public administration will stop supporting the project economically, so the companies involved in the cluster will need to use their own resources. It is expected to maintain the involvement of the municipalities and to enhance the involvement of the cohesion among companies, research centres and university.</p>
Transnationality	<p><i>What were the positive or negative impacts of transnational <u>exchanges</u>? How did these inform the nature of the solutions that were developed?</i></p> <p>Transnational exchanges have provided the project with very positive impacts. Contacts generated through transnational events can help to solve strategic decisions in the future. Most of the foreign experiences studied were in a very advanced stage and can give Sabadell the clue to drive innovation plan to the success. Other positive impact is the dissemination of the Sabadell brand in those countries.</p>
Duration	<p><i>Will the project continue during the coming months / years? In what form will it continue?</i></p> <p>The Innovation Plan will be supported and led by Sabadell until Summer 2011. After that, a transition stage is foreseen in order to create an innovation association between the companies and entities involved in the cluster projects.</p>
Transferability	<p><i>Does it appear that the practice is capable of transfer to another situation?</i></p> <p>Yes it does. Other sectors rather than Food and Health can use this project methodology.</p>
Expert opinion	<p><i>What makes this case interesting from an external perspective?</i></p> <p>The process of systematically analyzing the innovation needs and potential of local firms and building up their involvement and ownership of a long term joint strategy for improvement.</p>
Stakeholder opinion	<p><i>What makes this case interesting from each key stakeholder perspective?</i></p> <p>There are various partners involved in the project, so the perspective might be different depending on the field they work at :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business sector and industry: They benefit from the project in a very clear way, increasing their competitiveness is the main goal of the Innovation Plan. Business sector and industry will benefit of the contact with universities and Research centres thanks to the channels generated by the cluster framework. In addition cooperation with these centres will decrease the cost of their innovation processes. International visibility is another important factor for business and industry, acting as a whole the cluster will have more chance to open new markets. Finally knowledge transfer from universities, research centres and company to company are a valuable point for them. - Research centres and universities: They have the chance to participate in several projects with companies of any sector. They can create patents, which is a good way to fund themselves. - Hospitals (in the case of health cluster): They have multiple interests because they can create products, together with the business sector and at the same time they will benefit from consuming these new innovative products. <p>In general, the Innovation Plan is meant to benefit all the partners involved. The</p>

	proximity and the social connection between the partners makes the dissemination of innovative processes greater than either formal or informal networks.
Information sources	
Name of the initiative	Innovation Plan of the Ripoll River Basin
Country/region/city etc.	Spain/Catalonia/Barcelona/Sabadell
Administering organisation(s)	Ajuntament de Sabadell
Contact details of administering organisation(s)	<i>Promoció Econòmica de Sabadell SL 93 745 31 61</i> <i><u>GMayol@ajsabadell.cat</u></i>
Other documentation sources	
Website URL	<i>http://www.vaporllonch.net/vaporllonc/PlaInnovacio.asp</i>
Main author of the case	<i>Gerard Mayol</i>

URBACT II

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 300 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

www.urbact.eu



EUROPEAN
PROGRAMME
FOR
SUSTAINABLE
URBAN
DEVELOPMENT

