
Results SWOT + potential cooperation topics (UA) concluded from S3CN,1st cross-border workshop 22.6.22

1. SWOT Analysis

1.1. #upperVISION2030

A SWOT Analysis was conducted in order to become a better understanding about the status quo of both regions. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were elaborated according to the action fields.

In #upperVISION2030 there are 4 Action fields defined:

- Digital Transformation
- Efficient and Sustainable Industry and Manufacturing
- Systems and Technologies for People
- Connected and Efficient Mobility

These four actions are accompanied by following horizontal topics, which play a central role in each action field:

- Education, skilled labor
- Key technologies and core competencies
- Digitization as an enabler
- Sustainable solutions

Upper Austria has strong R&D activities in the field of “Digital Transformation”. The transfer from research to implementation works very well. In contrast, some SMEs are still struggling with digital transformation. One major implication is the lack of financial resources of SMEs. A weak point is the Digital Transformation process in the public sector. There is still potential in the public sector. A great opportunity for Digital Transformation lies in the establishment of “Institute of Digital Sciences Austria” – which is also known as the new university in Linz. The goal is to secure Austria's digital competitiveness, to work on interdisciplinary research fields, and to implement innovative teaching and transfer methods.

Furthermore, in the field of “Efficient and sustainable Industry and Manufacturing” the supply chain in retail is definitely a strength. Upper Austria has a strong network of suppliers. However, on the other side the missing awareness about the strength is a weak point. As the industry is large and includes established and innovative companies, which are capable of producing alternative energy. An obvious threat is that the rising energy costs caused by the Russian and

Ukrainian war makes it very difficult for the companies to produce at the same output at the same price level.

In the field of “Systems and Technologies for people” the lack of companies which address this topic makes it difficult to push the topic forward in the region. On the other hand, the med faculty at JKU campus offer a chance for companies or even start-ups to choose to locate to Upper Austria.

In the last action field “connected and efficient Mobility” Upper Austria is strongly positioned. Especially according to E-Mobility. BMW plans a huge investment in the BMW plant that is positioned in Steyr. In future the BMW plant in Steyr should focus more in E-Mobility. On the other hand, the location Steyr which is also considered as the automotive center in Upper Austria, the companies faced a lot of problems due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Beside the action fields there are other issues which play also an important role in Upper Austria, such as education and skilled labor. In Upper Austria there are many opportunities for education due to the education variety. Nevertheless, there is still the huge problem of missing specialists and qualified human resources.

According to key technologies and core competences, the established companies in Upper Austria are capable of develop and implement technologies e.g. for sustainable solutions. Another opportunity is the variety of funding schemes which supports companies to develop innovative ideas for sustainable solutions.

1.2. RIS3 South Bohemia

Five domains of specialisation:

- Mechanical engineering and mechatronics,
- Electronics, electrical engineering and IT
- Biotechnology for sustainable development of society,
- Automotive
- Textile and clothing industry

Four key areas for changes:

- Quality human resources,
- Cooperation and technology and knowledge transfer,
- Business Development and innovations,
- Development of digitalisation, smart solutions and Industry 4.0



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South Bohemia has diversified manufacturing industry and strong agri-food complex based on tradition in the field of agriculture, the food-processing industry, forestry, fishing, brewing. The region is also quite attractive environment for leisure activities (sports, adventure tourism, culture) and favourable geographical location in relation to the rich European markets.

The presence of the faculties of the University of South Bohemia and research institutions with cutting-edge research in the area of life sciences and biology (Biology Center CAS) and emerging applied research in response to major social challenges is not precisely matching the profile of major entrepreneurship sector that is more technical orientated (automotive, mechatronics, construction, etc.) which is resulting in the low level of cooperation between the research and business sector. On the other hand there is a strong research base within the field of agriculture and the food-processing industry and its relevance to the regional enterprises.

As for the business development and innovations there are emerging networks and innovation infrastructure (Science and Technology Parks, Technology Transfer Centres, the Design and Innovation Centre, the Technology Consortium with leading industrial companies in the South Bohemia Region) and strong tradition in cross-border cooperation within the Euroregions as well as the existence of industrial zones and development areas for investors around the region (including the development area of the Airport České Budějovice). Also support to start-ups is being recognized not only as an efficient tool for the development of innovations and new businesses but also for further crossborder cooperation. Some of the general limiting aspects for further development of regional innovation system can be recognized as the lack qualified workers (especially within technical fields), mismatch of R&D and regional enterprise focus and low level of digitalisation of companies.

2. Potential Cooperation Topics & Fields

Based on the SWOT analysis of both regions' potential cooperation topics and cooperation fields were discussed. A common weakness of both regions is the lack of skilled workers. In order to promote skilled workers. A common weakness in both regions is the shortage of skilled workers. There is a risk that both regions will stand in each other's way on this point. Currently, for Czech workers who live at the border or near the border to Austria, it is more attractive for them to work in Austria due to higher salaries. In order to avoid competition, it is important to find a solution which is acceptable for both regions.

Furthermore, both regions have attractive conditions for start-ups. In order to support start-ups to establish in both regions an intensify cooperation it is important to develop funding instruments. One idea, which came up was to set a start-up competition and organize common events in Upper Austria and South Bohemia.

In terms of technology transfer more cooperation is needed. For example, supportive activities can help researchers to find companies which implement their research results and vice versa companies



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may find researchers who can offer solutions for their problems, especially for SMEs it is often difficult to find the right partner who has the solution for its issue. One concrete proposal was to develop a platform for researchers meet companies.

Moreover, in the field of education potential cooperation possibilities were identified. In South Bohemia the level of technical equipment in schools is very high and works very well. In contrast, in Upper Austria there is potential for improvement. Cooperation in this area would strengthen the relationship between Upper Austria and South Bohemia and open doors, for example exchange programs for students and also for teachers. This is a win-win situation for both regions.

Another possible cooperation topic includes common activities in order to support municipalities to become more sustainable in terms of e-mobility, alternative energy and develop technologies for sustainable municipalities.

Last but not least, following topics were also identified as possible cooperation field:

- Hydrogen
- B2B-meetings
- Limonology AT/CZ



