



# PROJECT PERIODIC REPORT

**Grant Agreement number: 277440**

**Project acronym: WIRE 2011**

**Project title: Organizing the Conference Week of Innovative Regions 2011**

**Funding Scheme: Coordination and support actions (Coordinating Action)**

**Date of latest version of Annex I against which the assessment will be made:**

**Periodic report:**                    1<sup>st</sup> ☒    2<sup>nd</sup> ☐    3<sup>rd</sup> ☐    4<sup>th</sup> ☐

**Period covered: from 11<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to 11<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**Name, title and organisation of the scientific representative of the project's coordinator<sup>1</sup>:**

**Márta Nadabán Völgyiné;**

**Deputy Director;**

**INNOVA Észak-Alföld Regional Development and Innovation Agency Nonprofit Ltd.**

**Tel: 00 36 52 880 250**

**Fax:**

**E-mail: [marta.nadaban@eszak-alfold.hu](mailto:marta.nadaban@eszak-alfold.hu)**

**Project website address: [www.wire2011.eu](http://www.wire2011.eu)**

---

<sup>1</sup> Usually the contact person of the coordinator as specified in Art. 8.1. of the Grant Agreement .

### 3.1 *Publishable summary*

The conference called Week of Innovative Regions in Europe 2011 was jointly organized by the European Commission and the Hungarian Presidency on 7th - 9th June 2011 in Debrecen, Hungary. WIRE2011 was a one week event, containing a two and a half day conference and several side-events and was covering the two main issues: European cluster policy and research infrastructures. WIRE2011 brought together more than 500 experts from all over Europe and from outside of Europe, altogether from 33 countries, it represented the opinions of 55 lecturers. With the support of these European stakeholders, the event was focusing to provide adequate answers to the following key issues:

- Ensure that innovative ideas can be transformed into products and services that foster growth and create jobs in Europe
- Develop a holistic approach to research and innovation policy in Europe through increased synergies between clusters and research infrastructures
- Raise innovation capability and performance in all regions with a view to avoid innovation gaps;
- Encourage the design of smart specialization strategies through roadmaps where clusters and research infrastructures play a crucial role;
- Attract the best researchers from around the world through competitive open access to high quality research infrastructures;
- Foster the use and development of state-of-the-art e-infrastructures mediating and supporting the research and innovation processes in a stimulating e-science environment.

The conference featured as well an exhibition to showcase results of synergies between clusters, regions and research infrastructures. This parallel exhibition offered an outstanding opportunity for 18 leading international clusters, research infrastructures and regions to present their good practices in the subject. Two major social and networking events and two study visits accompanied the event. The conference was dedicated to potential synergies between research infrastructures and cluster policy and paved the way for discussions for urgent questions for innovation and research policy at regional level:

- Can regions use the resources devoted to research and innovation more efficiently?
- How do smart specialisation strategies enable the optimal use of research infrastructures while considering their role in clusters, regional innovation support systems and networks?
- How do regional dimensions in research infrastructures contribute to regional development? Do they positively affect regional research and innovation performance?
- Can tools, such as European Research Infrastructure Consortia, assist to improve the construction of and the access to high quality large research infrastructures?

The event's primary aim was to turn the attention of European research and innovation stakeholders on the competitiveness of European regions from the point of cluster development and research infrastructure investments. A set of recommendations formulated together with the European Commission addressing the most important challenges of European research and innovation policy were expressed and presented during the conference as its final outcome: Debrecen Declaration. The key messages of WIRE2011 are covered by the main outcome of the conference called Debrecen Declaration that had been set up by a special expert team and had been accepted by the

Presidency Trio: Spain, Belgium and Hungary, involving the next presidency MS: Poland. As follow-up activities a final publication was published that gave an overview on the organisation, content and discussions and on the concrete outcomes of WIRE2011. Furthermore a cocktail reception was organised on the 5th of December 2011 in Brussels to give an appropriate follow-up for WIRE2011 and the Debrecen Declaration and ensuring the visibility for the continuation of WIRE in 2012.

The three-day conference (WIRE 2011) was organised in Debrecen, Hungary during the EU Hungarian Presidency (Presidency Conference), with the aim to give an appropriate follow up to the conference organised in Granada during the Spanish Presidency (WIRE: Week of the Innovative Regions of Europe). During the last decades the European regions, as Europe itself collected first-hand experiences on how research and innovation policies could enhance their competitiveness, from their regional perspective. Several successful regions dedicate research and development initiatives to increased synergies between research infrastructures and cluster policy especially recently within the framework of the 'EUROPE 2020 Strategy', the 'Innovation Union Flagship Initiative' and the 'Digital Agenda'. Hence, WIRE 2011 conference provided a great opportunity to exchange views on optimal use of resources to affect regional research and innovation performance more efficiently.

It highlighted and discussed the first conclusions drawn by the Expert Group on synergies between FP, SF and CIP, and took into consideration the conclusions of the high-level European Cluster Policy Group, as well as the orientations provided in the future European Research and Innovation Plan. As an illustrating example of efficient synergies, the conference dedicated several sections/roundtables to the regional dimension of research infrastructures because of their crucial role in the R&D&I performance. The conference examined the tools which can help us to improve the construction of and the access to high quality large research infrastructures. Some of these tools are research driven clusters, synergies between funds, ERIC, networking and research infrastructure register.

WIRE2011 – considering the document of 'EUROPE 2020, a strategy for a smart, sustainable and inclusive development strategy' - focused on questions related to knowledge, innovation and competitiveness in economy with respect to the R&D infrastructure investments, clusters and their effects on RDI at regional and European level.

Beyond lessons learned, thorough discussions delivered important contribution both regarding the preparation of regional smart specialisation strategies and future orientation of European and national research and innovation policies. The recommendations and conclusions formulated during the conference will be channelled by the Hungarian and Polish Presidencies to the ministerial discussions.

The key messages of WIRE2011 are covered by the main outcome of the conference called Debrecen Declaration that had been set up by a special expert team and had been accepted by the Presidency Trio: Spain, Belgium and Hungary.

#### **Key messages resulted from the conference:**

- New partnerships have to be developed between research infrastructures and clusters, facilitating the emergence of strong innovative European regions. This requires further efforts in developing new research infrastructures (RIs) and

upgrading existing ones, including e-infrastructures, both at European and regional level.

- We need synergies among European, national and regional policies in the field of Research infrastructures.
- Clusters are instrumental in the future for planning and implementing smart specialisation strategies at regional and national levels, for creating optimal framework conditions for existing and new emerging industries, for promoting excellence, and for connecting local and regional economies to the global economy through increased internationalization.
- Aligning Cohesion Policy with the objectives and targets of the EU 2020 Strategy will only be efficient if the regional authorities take ownership of their strategies, and are able to prioritise their R&D&I actions.
- Regional and national public authorities should promote Smart Specialisation Strategies based on evidence of regional assets and capabilities and focusing on regional strengths, competitive advantage and a limited number of priorities.
- A stronger and more focused support for construction costs of regional RIs and for operation costs by the European Union, and pooling of national resources across a wider range of infrastructures, will be critical factors for sustainability.

Project web page: <http://www.wire2011.eu>

**Coordinator: INNOVA Észak – Alföld Regional Development and Innovation Agency (HU)**

Contact details: Name: Mrs. Márta Völgyiné Nadabán

Phone: 00 36 30 880 250;

E - mail: [marta.nadaban@eszak-alfold.hu](mailto:marta.nadaban@eszak-alfold.hu)

Postal Address: H – 4031, Debrecen, Kürtös street 4.



**Picture 1.:** Photo about the WIRE 2011 conference