

Project no. 043015

ForTransRIS

**A New Transregional Foresight Model For The Regional Innovation
Strategies (RIS)**

Co-ordination Action

Open Method Co-ordination (OMC-NET)

Final Publishable Activity Report

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Project coordinator organisation name: Navarra Government. Department of
Innovation, Business and Employment, DG Enterprise.

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1. Project Execution

Introduction.

This document describes the main activities and results carried out by the “**ForTransRIS. A New Transregional Foresight Model for the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS)**” project, a consortium of eleven partners, both regional governmental bodies competent on Research Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) policy-making and expert organisations on research on Foresight and Strategic Intelligence Tools.

The project funded by DG Research of the European Commission under the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) began in January 2007 and ended on March 2009. The work of the project is showcased on the following website: www.fortransris.net.

Background.

The ForTransRIS project is aimed at improving the efficiency of Regional Innovation Strategies and to increase the transregional Knowledge and Technology Transfer, through the development and application of a new co-operative model for transregional foresight.

Lisbon Strategy demands an increase on the interregional co-operation in Research Technology Development and Innovation (RTDI), if Europe is to become the most competitive economy on the global market.

Innovation processes take place mainly at the regional level. Thus, EU regions are entitled to play a key role in the bottom up development of policies leading to the European Research Area (ERA).

Due to the lack of access to practical tools allowing the development of transregional innovation strategies conducive to open and collaborative frameworks, an actual fatigue of project based interregional cooperation schemes is taking place.

ForTransRIS Project delivers a specific experience involving 5 regions on the use of Foresight as a practical tool for the design of common Regional Innovation Strategies: Navarra (Spain), Bretagne (France), Liguria (Italy), Stuttgart (Germany) and Stockholm (Sweden).

Resulting methodology, based upon the outcomes of a practical experience on the transregional foresight in the field of Knowledge and Technology Transfer, is applicable by all EU regions interested of further opening up their innovation systems.

Objectives.

The ForTransRIS project aims at designing, developing, implementing, evaluating and disseminating a new model of Transregional Foresight, for the creation of Regional Innovation Strategies and Systems more efficient and co-ordinated, in the ERA framework.

The project expects to tackle a new application for the Foresight, which up to now, has been used mainly for identifying technological scenarios and strategies in the field of the innovation strategies and regional systems. In other words, the aim is to improve the efficiency of the Public Innovation Policies. Specific Objectives of ForTransRIS have been the following:

1. To develop the necessary methodology for carrying out the processes of Transregional Foresight in order to improve the Regional Innovation Strategies.
2. To apply the Transregional Foresight Methodology for the improvement and best integration of the Regional Innovation Strategies in the European context.
3. To establish a sustainable Trans-regional Co-operation Network among the participant regions.
4. To obtain a wide diffusion and dissemination of the project's results. In particular among the regional and national Innovation policy makers.

Contractors involved and Co-ordinator contact details.

Partner N°	Contractor	Senior staff involved
1	Gobierno de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain.	Mr. Rafael Muguerza, Ms. Begoña Sesma.
2	Fundación Observatorio de Prospectiva Tecnológica Industrial - OPTI, Madrid, Spain.	Ms. Ana Morato, Ms. Maribel Narváez.
3	Fundación Innova para el Desarrollo de la Ciencia y la Tecnología en la Comunidad Valenciana, Valencia, Spain	Ms. Alicia Martínez.
4	Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum der Steinbeis Stiftung Wirtschaftsfoerderung, Stuttgart, Germany	Mr. Günter Clar, Ms. Sabine Hafner-Zimmermann.
5	Fondazione Rosselli, Turin, Italy	Mr. Claudio Roveda, Mr. Riccardo Vecchiato.
6	Inno Skandinavia, Stockholm, Sweden	Mr. Erik Asplund, Mr. Johan Skogh.
7	CM International SA, Paris, France	Mr. François Farhi, Mr. Bruno Lancien.
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9	Lansstyrelsen i Stockholm Laen, Stockholm, Sweden	Mr. Mats Ershammar.
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Work performed and Objectives achieved.

To meet the objectives of the project, 3 scientific Workpackages have been developed (Workpackages 2 to 4), and 3 horizontal ones (Management and Co-ordination, Promotion and Dissemination and Quality Control).

Approach of ForTransRIS has been mainly methodological but it has also relied on the practical experimentation of a Transregional Foresight Pilot Case, in order to validate the resulting methodology. The following chart sums up the methodological approach followed by the project and the implemented tasks:

Time	Wp N°	Activity	Region level	Transr. level
2007	2	Design of a Transregional Foresight Model, focusing on RTDI policy issues, exceeding the regional level, suitable to be dealt at the transregional one.		✗
		Identification of Transregional RTDI key issues affecting each Region	▶	
		Selection and agreement on 1 specific RTDI key issue as Transregional Foresight topic.		✗
	3	Assessment of the relevance and uncertainty of specific Drivers affecting selected topic.	▶	
		Integration and agreement on 2 most relevant common drivers affecting involved regions.		✗
		Building of 2 future transregional scenarios (worst and best case) upon the combination of selected 2 drivers.		✗
2008 and 2009		Evaluation of the 2 transregional scenarios at the regional level for the selection of hot topics and barriers hindering the Best Case Scenario.	▶	
		Transregional Stakeholders Panel for agreement on a Transregional Vision and Road Map.		■
	4	Evaluation Transregional Road Map and design of Regional Road Maps	▶	
		Dissemination of the Transregional and Regional Road Maps to regional key Stakeholders	✗	
		Elaboration and dissemination of a Transregional Foresight Methodology Guide at a European Seminar		✗
		Constitution of Network		✗

ForTransRIS has achieved the following Objectives:

Objective 1. Definition of Transregional Foresight Methodology definition

ForTransRIS has produced a “**Transregional Foresight in Action: some practical guidelines**” publication, which describes the innovative methodology defined under the project for the implementation of transregional Foresight in the field of Regional Innovation Strategies.

Main characteristics of this methodology, allowing the development of transregional foresight processes by Research Technology Development and Innovation (RTDI) Policymakers at the regional level on key issues affecting the RTDI Governance, are the following:

- It is transregional in its scope, following the guidelines stated under the TECHTRANS Blue Print process conducted by the EC on 2004. It is designed to

address the needs and challenges that Regional Innovation Strategies can not delve by themselves and are suitable to be dealt at a transregional level.

- It is focused on the development of Foresight processes on Regional Innovation Strategy policies, rather than in transregional technological foresight.
- It has been agreed by 5 different partners, experts in Foresight and other Strategic Intelligence Policy tools, matching different approaches and methodologies on Foresight, providing thus what might be a future “European Innovation Foresight Model”.
- Methodology is comprehensive, covering all stages of a Foresight process, from the identification of the topics to be addressed, to the final definition and agreement of Transregional and Regional Road Maps.
- It is a practical model, tested on an specific Pilot Case where 5 European Regions have been involved, with clear tasks, calendar and responsibilities for each of the involved actors, that will allow Regional Innovation policymakers to conduct them with a limited expertise.

Even though the Pilot Case was focused on an specific, although broad subject, “Transregional Technology and Knowledge Transfer to SMEs”, resulting **methodology is deemed applicable** on a broader basis, allowing RTDI Policymakers at the regional level to start Transregional Foresight processes with other EU regions about other topics of their interest.

The Methodology has been successfully experimented upon the Project, and once the Pilot Case was concluded, the design of the final version of the Methodology implemented with the feedback from all partners took place.

Resulting document, “**Transregional Foresight in Action: some practical guidelines**” is a practical guide aimed at RTDI Policymakers interested on getting involved on transregional foresight exercises with other regions, looking thus for the improvement and opening up of the Regional Innovation Strategies.

Guidelines are eminently practical and cover the 5 sequential stages identified for an effective Transregional Foresight process on Regional Innovation Strategies.

1. Identification and selection a transregional Topic to be tackled by RIS on the transregional level and of common interest to all involved regions.
2. Pre-Foresight stage, focused on the analysis of existing knowledge sources, the selection and involvement of Regional Stakeholders, and the definition of Drivers affecting the key topic.
3. Main Foresight stage, where the Drivers’ Relevance and Uncertainty is assessed in order to select key drivers upon which to build Scenarios.
4. Transregional Foresight stage, where several transregional scenarios are built, and assessed by regional Stakeholders for the identification of barriers and transregional actions to be undertaken in order to overcome them, in order to reach

the desired scenario. A common Vision is agreed by all regional Stakeholders at this stage.

5. Road Mapping stage, built on the overcome of the barriers identified at the transregional and regional level, through the implementation of specific actions.

Main added value of the Guidelines is that each stage is completed with the main **Lessons Learnt** by the ForTransRIS partnership's experimental implementation of such methodology in the Pilot Case.

Objective 2. Transregional Foresight Methodology experimentation.

Transregional Foresight Pilot Case focused on the following topic: **Knowledge and Technology Transfer. Matching knowledge providers (research institutions, universities, RTDI in big companies) with SMEs in order to foster innovation.**

The ForTransRIS pilot case used a very dynamic approach to the methodology described in the previous section, as it was continually adapted to the requirements of the regions throughout the duration of the project. This methodological approach enriched the project as it required strong interaction amongst partners, who had to agree on steps to follow and how to complete them, but also burnt the process very time consuming.

The Pilot Case was implemented through the following stages:

Stage 1: Selection of Transregional Foresight Topic

- ***Task 1. Identification of 5 Regional Maps of Transregional Key Issues affecting Regional Innovation Strategies.***

Key issues were identified following a participatory approach with regional Stakeholders, which were involved through Stakeholders Panels all along the project. A description of the Regional Innovation Ecosystem and a SWOT analysis of broad policy issues affecting RIS from a transregional perspective are part of the mapping effort.

- ***Task 2. Elaboration of a Transregional Map of Key Issues.***

The Transregional Map was elaborated compiling the inputs of the 5 regional maps, for the identification of common challenges and threats that might be tackled from a transregional perspective. Three potential Transregional Keys issues were identified: 1) Regional Governance for the fostering of Networking, cooperation and coordination; 2) Mechanisms for Technology and Knowledge Transfer and 3) Good Practises in RIS design.

- ***Task 3. Selection of common transregional topic.***

Regions of the project assessed the alternatives upon transferability and transregionality criteria, and the following Key Topic was agreed: **Knowledge and Technology Transfer Matching knowledge providers (research institutions, universities, R&D in big companies) with SMEs in order to foster innovation.**

Stage 2: Pre-foresight stage:

- ***Task 1. Identification of relevant Stakeholders.***

All Regions identified those Stakeholders more relevant to be consulted and for participating on a Transregional Foresight exercise focused on the selected topic, as they represent main promoters in the regional level of the Knowledge and Technology Transfer towards SMEs

- ***Task 2. Selection of the 'knowledge sources' and setting up of Regional Stakeholders Panels.***

All Regions selected their main knowledge sources, mainly available key strategic documents on the regional innovation system, or Working Groups already addressing the TKT issue. Additionally all regions selected key Stakeholders to be consulted on the evaluation of the Drivers affecting the selected topic.

- ***Task 3. Collection of basic documentation and definition of a preliminary list of critical issues (drivers) affecting addressed transregional topic.***

The output of this activity was the definition of a preliminary list of critical issues, namely of factors (drivers) which can influence and affect the access of SMEs to knowledge generated outside their region, and therefore their co-operation with foreign research institutions, universities, R&D units of large companies. Proposed drivers (16) fell under 5 fields: Economic System, Knowledge System, Human Capital, RDI Public Policies and Social features.

- ***Task 4. Integration of the Preliminary List of drivers by the Panels.***

All Regions based upon consultation with key Stakeholder or upon the information available at other knowledge sources tried to identify further drivers that might be affecting the TKT issue on their regional context. As a result of the process, further drivers were identified by some regions.

- ***Task 5. Definition of the final list of drivers.***

With the feedback from all regions Final List of drivers to be evaluated on the following stage was elaborated. A total of 23 drivers were identified by involved regions.

Stage 4. Main Foresight

- ***Task 1. Evaluation of the Relevance and Uncertainty of the drivers.***

Relevance is related to the influence (either positive or negative) of the assessed driver on the process of TKT. Uncertainty means that it's not clear what the influence is going to be (positive or negative), and if the driver will or not take place.

Both concepts were assessed by regional Stakeholders Panels using a simple methodology of selection and relative weighting of available drivers taking into consideration their relevance and uncertainty.

- **Task 2. Identification of the basic drivers for the scenarios and selection of the scenarios (2) to be built: Best Case and Worst Case scenarios.**

Taking into consideration those drivers assessed as more Uncertain and Relevant on each region a list of common drivers was agreed. Clustering these priority and common drivers, 2 drivers were agreed upon which to build the future Scenarios: “Propensity to business risk and innovation” and “Governance system in Europe”.

Stage 4. Transregional Foresight

- **Task 1. Building of Transregional Scenarios.**

A scenario is a story that connects a description of specific future to present realities in a series of causal links that illustrate decisions and consequences. A scenario is not a single prediction or forecast, but a way of organising many internally consistent statements about the future.

For each basic driver, two configurations were considered, which are the extremes of the situations likely to become the real between them. In order to simplify the prospective analysis, only two scenarios were built:

- 1) Baseline or Worst Case or “Stormy” scenario (low propensity to business risk and fragmented governance system), as an the extrapolation of today’s negative situation and so, the worst case framework.
- 2) Optimal or Best Case or “Sunny” scenario (high propensity to business risk and an integrated governance system), as the best case or visionary scenario.

- **Task 2. Presentation and discussion of the scenarios.**

Scenarios were agreed by partners. Final Scenarios information was rearranged falling into **11 Topics** affecting TKT. Both Scenarios addressed the same Topics and described their different perspective on the given Scenario.

- **Task 3. Regional Foresight: Evaluation of the scenarios for the agreement of a regional Vision and 3 main topics for the achievement of such Vision.**

Partners validated the Scenarios in the framework of regional Stakeholders Panels, and came up with regional Visions. The result of such panels were **5 Regional Foresight Reports** with the description of the preferred Vision, selection of the 3 Topics deemed as most important for attaining the regional Vision, the barriers to implement the vision and the role and the contribution that Transregional Cooperation might have when dealing with and overcoming the barriers.

- **Task 4. Comparative analysis of 5 regional Foresight Reports.**

As a results of this assessment of the Report, 4 hot topics were identified as those that better matched the priorities of the 5 regions:

- SME's New Business Models.
- SME's networking and interactions with sources of Knowledge.
- Human resources: training and management policies and attraction of talents to a region.
- Entrepreneurship of universities and public research organisations (responsiveness to SME's needs, quality of research).

- **Task 5. Transregional Stakeholders Panel for the agreement of a common transregional Vision around 3 main topics**

A Transregional Stakeholders Panel took place in Stockholm on April 15th 2008. Composed by 28 participants its goal was to commonly design a **Transregional Vision** taking into account the common identified topics.

Following some innovative methodologies (Regional back-casting coached by trans-regional systemic reflections and brainstorming rotating thematic work shops on 3 common hot topics) a Transregional Vision was agreed in 3 common topics:

- SME's New Business Models.
- SME's networking and interactions with sources of Knowledge.
- Entrepreneurship of universities and public research organisations (responsiveness to SME's needs, quality of research).

Stage 5: Road Mapping:

- **Task 1. Design of Transregional Road Map.**

A “**Trans-Regional Roadmap for an improved Trans-regional Technology and Knowledge Transfer**”, was designed and agreed by partners, focusing on the design of structures and models enabling trans-regional co-operation. In the 3 selected topics. The Road Map is divided in two level of actions:

1. The development of a transregional network of SMEs / Virtual companies. This is a merger of two of the hot topics: Networking and SME's Business Models.
2. Development of a trans-regional technology transfer model among regions.

For each action, a sequential work plan with activities, timeframe, Stakeholders involved, milestones and necessary funding are described.

- **Task 2. Validation of Transregional Road Map – Regional Road Map**

Once again, the methodology followed was a consultation process with regional Stakeholders in order to validate the Transregional Road Map and come up with regional ones.

To that end, a last round of regional Stakeholders Panels were organised. Some flexibility in the regional processes and regional interpretation were allowed. Thus,

each region was to focus on the areas that they feel are the most prioritised for them, so that might mean skipping some of the steps from the trans-regional roadmap. As a result, **5 Regional Road Maps** were agreed.

The Foresight Pilot Case has been effective, as it has allowed for 5 EU regions to come up with a Transregional Vision and Road Map on one key topic for their Regional Innovation Strategies.

Thus, the feasibility of the **transregional foresight methodology** experimented upon has been proven as **successful**. Nonetheless, 2 main remarks might be addressed:

- it should be noted that the process has been very time consuming and complex, and that many Lessons have been learnt from the process. This is the main reason why the Lesson Learnt from the Pilot Case figure so prominently on the resulting **“Transregional Foresight in Action: some practical guidelines”**.
- Moreover, it can be claimed that the ForTransRIS Pilot Case is an **“artificial” or “laboratory”** one. Its main goal is to experiment and validate an innovative methodology rather than directly improve or affect the involved region’s Regional Innovation Strategies or their transregional cooperation efforts. As a research or “laboratory” study case, the kind of proximity needed among involved partners is not the same as the one required in true transregional foresight exercises where the proximity concept (geographical, technological, relational) among regions, is a pre-requisite.

Notwithstanding, and even if it was not its first goal, we must stress out that the Foresight Pilot Case do has had a positive impact on involved region’s Regional Innovation Strategies:

- The development and exchange of 5 regional competence maps on Innovation and on future regional and transregional challenges of their RIS has allowed the characterisation and further knowledge of RIS capabilities and complementarities of involved 5 regions. This has led to an increase on the number of collaborative projects and initiatives jointly developed by ForTransRIS project partners.
- On the process, all partners have initiated or deepened a reflective and participatory process on the future configuration of their RIS, valuable as a strategic policy exercise by itself. It has provided policymakers with a broader overview of other regions’ challenges and stakes, similar to their own, as well as the identification of potential means of collaboration.
- Five regional Stakeholders Panels have been identified, involved and consulted on the process, creating high expectations. The involvement of these Panels in all relevant stages of the Foresight process has ensured the ownership and accountability of the whole process. More than 70 participants on such regional Stakeholders Panels have found a new forum where the Regional Innovation Strategies framework can be discussed using innovative approaches such as the one proposed by the ForTransRIS Pilot Case, based upon a “forward looking” (foresight) and “outwards looking” approach.

Objective 3. Transregional Co-operation Network.

This objective was only addressed once the Transregional and regional Road Maps were agreed. Taking into consideration the regional Road Maps it was evident that the level of commitment and feasibility of the Transregional Road Map varied greatly among partner regions.

For this reason, during the last Consortium Meeting held in Brussels, in March 2009, the idea of focusing the Network in the implementation of the Transregional Road Map was deemed as unfeasible. As all partners showed their interest on keep collaborating on a broader framework than the Transregional Road Map, finally a common topic of interest and directly linked to the ForTransRIS Pilot Case was agreed to create the Network. The topic agreed was: **Open Innovation**.

Thus, Network will focus on the topic of Open Innovation, a topic not directly addressed by ForTransRIS, but closely related to transregional collaborative frameworks, and most important of all, a topic that matches the interests of all project partners. A **Network Concept Paper** was agreed by partners, which addressed the future Network's **Mission**:

The aim of the Open Innovation Network is to disseminate, facilitate and encourage the concept of Open Innovation amongst all type of practitioners including Regional Authorities, Research actors and companies. Defined as a Work Laboratory the Network is to match two complementary approaches:

- *Policy research on the topic of Open Innovation, leading to the dissemination of the latest developments on this field, the identification and dissemination of Best Practices, the assessment of policy frameworks impact on current open Innovation,...*
- *Practical approach, where new and innovative interregional collaborative initiatives leading to Open Innovation among RTDI Stakeholders can be experimented upon and assessed for the identification and dissemination of new policy frameworks and practices.*

The Network Concept Paper also includes a Work Plan of transregional activities to be carried out by partners, membership information and a feasibility study for its effective constitution.

At present time **9 ForTransRIS partners** have already delivered official Letter of Intents to project Co-ordinator, stating their interest and commitment towards the future creation of the Open innovation Network.

Objective 4. Dissemination of Projects results.

ForTransRIS Project and results have been widely disseminated through the following means:

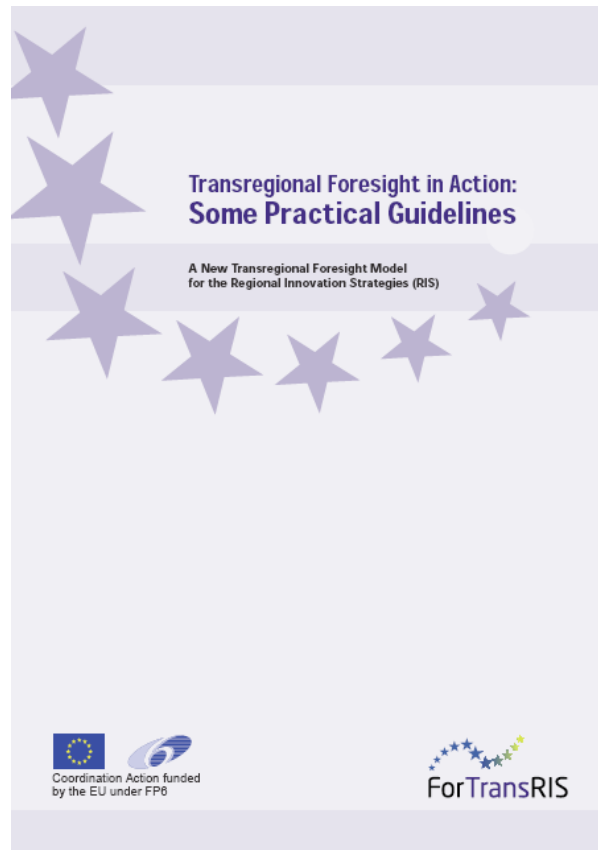
- **Project website** (www.fortransris.net) has been periodically updated with information on the progress of the project, Consortium Meetings held and

information on the upcoming ForTransRIS Final Seminar. Project website has received more than 4.100 visits in 1 year and 9 months.

- **Project Brochure/Folder** with information on the project, the partnership, and the Work Plan of the project were printed and used at the Transregional and regional Panels, dissemination workshops and Final Seminar.
- Presentation of the project has been quite extensive on partners' **project websites**, and on **specialized websites** such as the European Foresight Monitoring Network, whose brief number 148 focused on the ForTransRIS foresight methodology, "Transregional Foresight to Improve and Coordinate Regional Innovation Strategies in Europe". Such brief was elaborated by Steinbeis Europa Zentrum.
- ForTransRIS project has also been presented at many **regional fora** in all 5 partner regions. For instance, in Bretagne and Stockholm the project implementation has been coincident with the design of a new Regional Innovation Strategy, and the project objectives, progress and results have been widely disseminated among all the regional Innovation Stakeholders involved in the RIS design process. In Navarra, Stuttgart and Liguria, information on ForTransRIS has been also delivered to key Innovation Stakeholders, mainly through the regional Stakeholders Panels.
- Information on ForTransRIS has also been disseminated on **specialized events** focusing on Foresight, such as the Third International Seville Seminar on Future-Oriented Technology Analysis: Impacts and implications for policy and decision-making, where Steinbeis Europa Zentrum made a presentation and presented a paper where some of ForTransRIS findings were disseminated.
- **Five regional Dissemination Workshops** have taken place during the last three months of the project to disseminate the Transregional Road Map and regional Road Maps, with the involvement of all relevant Stakeholders at the regional level. More than 70 people have participated at these Workshops.
- The **ForTransRIS Final Seminar**, titled "**Europe 2020. From interregional co-operation to the Opening up of Regional Innovation Systems in Europe. What can EU Regions offer and what do they need?**" took place in Brussels in March 18th, with the attendance of more than 50 people coming from the European Commission, research centers and the Brussels offices of many EU regions.

2. Dissemination and Use

“**Transregional Foresight in Action: Some practical guidelines**” is the main output of the project. Guidelines are available in hard copy and are downloadable of project website: www.fortransris.net



“Transregional Foresight in Action: Some practical guidelines” cover

Guidelines have been designed to set out **new procedures for enabling innovative mechanisms for collaboration amongst regions**, as well as to explain the steps that have been taken during the ForTransRIS exercise.

This document is aimed at all of the **actors from regional innovation systems**, especially those involved in the definition of regional innovation strategies. The document is divided into 7 chapters.

- **Chapter 1** gives a brief overview of the current European situation by describing the possible future **roles of European regions** and the challenges they will have to face with regards to their innovation systems.
- **Chapter 2** draws the reader’s attention to the importance of **transregional foresight** as method for improving RIS.

- **Chapter 3** describes the main issues to be taken into account when choosing a **methodology** for and designing a transregional foresight project.
- **Chapter 4** deals with the **key actors** who should be involved in the process and how to find suitable partners
- **Chapter 5** gives details on which are the best **mobilisation and dissemination tools** in a project of these characteristics.
- **Chapter 6** explains how a **quality control plan** should be developed in a transregional foresight project.
- **Chapter 7** makes some **Policy Recommendations** derived from the project's results.

This guide has been written in view of the experience obtained in the ForTransRIS project, and is intended to be helpful tool for readers to wish to compare theory with practice.

As previously mentioned, these Guidelines are of additional value as it includes all of the **Lessons Learnt** during the development of the ForTransRIS project. The lessons learnt were not all necessarily learnt as a result of barriers hindering the achievement of the project's objectives or its failures, they are also the result of positive observations and objectives reached during the execution of the project.