

ORIGINN



Economic and social transformation in rural areas through industrial innovation, emphasis in agri-food sector

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NEWSLETTER Nº 1

Partners met in Östersund for the first ORIGINN transnational learning meeting



The ORIGINN partnership met, for the very first time on-site, in Östersund, Jämtland Härjedalen region (Sweden) on 20-21 June 2023 to have its first partner meeting. Despite the project having commenced

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in March, this gathering marked the first opportunity for the partners to come together face-to-face and exchange their valuable experiences pertaining to their respective policy instruments.

The primary objective of the meeting was to foster the development of individual and collective roadmaps, enabling each organization to articulate their objectives, goals, and anticipated insights in relation to their participation in the project. By collaboratively crafting these roadmaps, the partners set in motion the process of enhancing their own policies.

The atmosphere during the meeting was filled with excitement and anticipation as partners engaged in fruitful discussions, sharing their expertise and lessons learned. Excellent organization and hospitality of the partners from Sweden who organized this wonderful meeting and picturesque surroundings provided a delightful backdrop for this transformative event, enhancing the overall experience.



Day one, the 20th of June 2023, was spent at Arctura in Östersund, for presentations from each of the partners and a social lunch overlooking the surroundings. After the presentations we headed out to the village of Revsund by bus, for a study visit and dinner at the Revsund Brewery and Distillery. The journey took about an hour and during that time the visitors received a presentation on information and history about the region of Jämtland Härjedalen by Mr Torbjörn Westerlund.

On day two we met up at Östersunds busstation to travel to the village Ås and Torsta AB (educational centre for food development and upper secondary school for farming and forestry educations) where we had a locally produced midsummer lunch and got to know more about Torsta AB. The day was spent going through reporting on the project and having the pleasure to take part of Mr Simone Sassos, JRC, presentation on the concept of Startup Village and an introduction to the Startup Village Forum, Mr Sasso also gave us a sneak-peak on the Rural Toolkit and an overview on the scope and functions of the Rural Observatory. The visit ended with a joint dinner in Östersund on the evening of day two. For the detailed agenda, please see below.

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With the meeting now concluded, the ORIGINN partnership has embarked on a new chapter, inspired and motivated by the connections forged and the knowledge exchanged during their time together in Östersund. This milestone gathering has laid the foundation for significant progress in policy improvement for each participating organization.

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ORIGINN partners have selected the policy instruments to address throughout the project



In the first semester of the ORIGINN project, project partners started discussing and exchanging experiences around the policy instruments that they have respectively selected to improve throughout the project. Most partners aim at addressing instruments co-funded by European funds, whether it is under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Within the first, we find the ERDF of Romania's Centru region. Our partner, the Regional Development Agency of Centru will address the priority axis 1 (A competitive region through innovation, digitisation and dynamic businesses). The Regional Government of Emilia-Romagna, another partner, will also address ERDF, specifically address the objective on promoting social, economic and environmental development integrated and inclusive at local level, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and safety in areas other than those urban. The Government of Catalonia and the Ministry of Rural Affairs of Estonia will both address their respective EAFRD, and both will do so related to their specific objective on increasing the market orientation and competitiveness of the agrifood enterprises in rural areas, especially focusing on innovation. Our three remaining partners

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will address local policies and strategies. The Irish Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly will work to improve their Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES) - Dublin, Eastern and Midlands, when it comes to the actions foreseen for the Midlands (the most rural part of the country). The Region of Jämtland Härjedalen will address their Programme for Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021-2027, especially on everything related to rural innovation. Finally, the Prešov Self-Governing Region will address their Integrated territorial strategy of the Prešov Self-Governing Region for 2021-2030 (IUS PSK), with a special focus on agrifood innovation in their region.

Building Bridges and Fostering Collaboration - A Recap of the 1st Semester Activities

We are glad to share the significant milestones and accomplishments achieved during the first semester of implementation of the ORIGINN project.

1. Signing of Subsidy Contract and Partnership Agreement: A Solid Foundation

The first semester of the ORIGINN project kicked off with the signing of the subsidy contract. This contract established the financial framework and commitment necessary to support the project's initiatives, ensuring the successful execution of the project's goals.

2. Online Kick-off Meeting: Setting up cooperation

The ORIGINN project's online kick-off meeting brought together partners from the project consortium on 6th of March, 2023. The meeting provided an opportunity for partners to introduce themselves, align their visions, and delve into the strategic roadmap for the project's implementation. The virtual platform bridged geographical distances and fostered a sense of unity and purpose among partners.

3. 1st Transnational Learning Meeting in Östersund, Sweden: Sharing Insights

One of the highlights of the first semester was the 1st Transnational Learning Meeting, hosted in Östersund, Sweden on 20th-21st June, 2023. This physical meeting allowed partners to engage face-to-face, facilitating in-depth discussions and knowledge exchange. The meeting served as a platform to share insights, experiences, and good practices related to the topic of the project.

4. Local Stakeholder Meetings: Engaging Communities



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An important activity of the ORIGINN project the objective of fostering regional development and innovation within local communities. Local stakeholder meetings held during this semester provided partners with the opportunity to engage with key stakeholders in their respective regions. These meetings ensured that the project's initiatives are aligned with the actual needs and aspirations of the communities they serve, further enhancing the project's impact.

6. Individual Instrument Roadmaps: Tailoring Success

Recognizing the diversity of partners and their respective regions, the creation of individual instrument roadmaps was a crucial step taken during the first semester. These roadmaps outlined the specific policy instruments that each partner would undertake to achieve the project's objectives. Tailoring the project's approach to the unique circumstances of each partner region enhances the project's effectiveness and maximizes its outcomes.

As we reflect on the achievements of the first semester of the ORIGINN project, it is evident that the project is already making significant strides towards its goals. The signed subsidy contract, partnership agreement, transnational learning meeting, local stakeholder engagements, and individual instrument roadmaps collectively illustrate the dedication, collaboration, and innovation that define the project.

Project summary

In the last decades, most rural areas in the EU have developed at a lower rate than urban areas have; this has hampered the relative social and economic opportunities of these territories, leading to effects such as loss of population. Industries in rural areas tend to be more traditional than those in urban ones, with lower rates of industrialisation 4.0 and innovation achievements, which also limits their potential to generate jobs and economic opportunities. The agri-food sector, key one in rural areas, is the most significant one when addressing this challenge, for it often has a predominant presence in those territories, and – compared to companies in metropolises – those in rural lands tend to be more backwards when considering elements of industrial transition. Aware of this, strategies (including S3) and policies in most EU countries and regions now tackle this domain, including the development of rural areas through industrial transition and innovation, often with an emphasis in the agri-food sector, given its relevance.

ORIGINN's main goal is to enlarge and improve policy instruments in the involved territories (in EE, ES, IE, IT, RO, SE, SK) seeking to foster innovation-based industrial transition in rural areas, with an emphasis in the agri-food sector. Under this topic, ORIGINN puts special attention to digitalisation, industrial sustainability, social innovation, and soft innovation measures, devoting specific semesters-activities to each of them.

To reach the project's goal, project partners – all managing authorities – will exchange experiences for 3 years and monitor the results for an extra one. Among the activities, we find 8 partner meetings (including study visits), 56 stakeholder meetings, analyses of good practices, peer reviews, etc. Those

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will lead to the identification of 47 good practices and the improvement of 7 policy instruments (one per partner), improving their reach and/or efficiency, and enlarging their impact.

Partners



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