

A-RING – ALPINE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CAPACITY GOVERNANCE

NEWSLETTER 1, MAY 2021



A-RING, AN INTRODUCTION BY LP REPRESENTATIVE GIUSEPPE DE LUCA



Dear Readers, with the first edition of [A-RING](#) newsletter, we are pleased to introduce you to this Interreg Alpine Space project and its partners. Today, three A-RING project partners are presenting themselves, sharing the most relevant details of their institutions, their role in the project and main activities. The 2nd part of the newsletter is dedicated to an update on what has been achieved within the first two work packages of the project; and a highlight of past and upcoming events. Finally, you will find a few details about the partnership, the website and social media.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the project, which was for a great part devoted to the sharing of experiences, and on boosting cooperation and participation across the Alpine Region, to change its methodologies, so to adapt, as so many of us had to, to an exclusively online execution. This created some delays in technical Work Packages (WPT) 1 and 2, which caused the postponement and reconfiguration of many interactions. Nonetheless, the project has been progressing steadily. We are now happy to present you some deliverables from work packages 1 and 2. All project partners have been engaging with public authorities, businesses and academia, for the last two years, in order to develop the three outputs of the project:

- **Blueprint for Alpine Region Research and Innovation Agenda:** a strategic document aiming at defining a shared Research and Innovation (R&I) approach in the Alps;
- **Policy Briefs:** a roadmap with recommendations for policy makers to develop shared S3 strategies;
- **Alpine R&I Chart:** an action plan to foster transnational cooperation among academia and business sector representatives, to strengthen Alpine Region Research and Innovation.

The overall aim of the project is to **strengthen the R&I triple helix in the Alpine Region (AR)**, and to overcome the lack of a transnational approach and a shared vision on Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3/RIS3). A-RING will foster alignment between different R&I policy initiatives and institutional frameworks, to effectively address societal challenges, and improve the uptake of strengths and assets in the Alps.

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Pôle de coopération des universités, chercheurs et entreprises

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SECTION 1 - PROJECT PARTNERS' PRESENTATIONS

- **UNIVERSITY OF MILAN, A-RING LEAD PARTNER**

In 2006, based on the need to conduct applied research focusing on mountain specific challenges, the “**Center of Applied Studies for the Sustainable Management and Protection of Mountain Areas (Ge.S.Di.Mont)**” was established. GeSDiMont is an organization composed by **8 Departments of UMIL** – the University of Milan – that promotes, coordinates and develops scientific and applied research activities regarding **mountain areas in general, with a particular emphasis on the environment, agriculture and forestry**.

The “Ge.S.Di.Mont” Research Center, active at the UNIMONT hub (Edolo, Italy), aims at promoting and experimenting **methodological and operational innovation** specific to the characteristics, complexities and needs of mountain areas; and to start activities of **joint research and technology transfer**, on strategic issues **for the development of mountain regions**.

As **lead partner**, UMIL will ensure the smooth management of the project and the correct implementation of all PPs' activities with respect to timeline/budget. It will coordinate the development of the Blueprint for a shared R&I agenda in WPT1, as well as the internal and external communication of the project, ensuring that all target groups and observers are involved in the project activities.

- **UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES KEMPTEN, PP05**

Hochschule Kempten University of Applied Science (HKe) is a higher education institution training in the fields of engineering, business administration and tourism management, computer science and multimedia and social and health studies. A key feature of Kempten University is the broad and in-depth qualifications it offers with selected foundation degree programmes and a particular focus on practice and international aspects. In all the above-named fields, professors and research staff carry out research and development projects. These are centrally organized in the research centre “Forschungszentrum Allgäu” and the research areas **Mobility, Energy, Production and Social Innovation**. The cross-sectional competences in the areas of information and communication technology (ICT) and artificial intelligence (AI) each reinforce the subject-specific expertise from the university's various faculties.

During the project, HKe takes over the group lead of the work package 3 -“**Alpine Region based R&I**” - dealing with the implementation of Seed Labs. In these labs, representatives from academia and business sector will work together, and will generate new ideas in the field of Alpine research and innovation,, whilst generating recommendations for public authorities.

- **UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA (FACULTY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION), PP04**

University of Ljubljana (UL) is the largest and highest quality Slovenian scientific and research organization. The UL ranks among top 3 % of the most prominent universities in the world (source: Times Higher Education World University Rankings) and among the top 600 research universities (source: Shanghai ARWU).

In the A-RING project, UL will be involved in consultation with stakeholders (SHs) on strategic **topics for R&I in AR** with regional workshop in WPT1. It will support **PAs collaboration** in WPT2 and will be involved in creation of a network model between Academia/ SMEs,enterprises in Seed Lab.

UL has **strong links** with the major **stakeholders** (public & private sector, citizens); it is in the position to comprehensively analyse the innovation needs of the relevant social SHs, and thus to contribute to a significant social impact of the project. With its interdisciplinary competences in the field of public administration, and strong relationships with key stakeholders, it carried out a preliminary analysis of the situation and challenges in the field of national research and innovation policies in Slovenia and the EU. Its cooperation will subsequently contribute to a wide range of topics within socio-economic and administrative areas.

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Agrarmanagement Regionalland

 Università della Svizzera Italiana

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 POLYMERIS
Pole to commercialise the successful, production of compounds

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SECTION 2 - FIRST RESULTS ON THE PATH FOR A SHARED ALPINE R&I APPROACH

IDENTIFICATION OF A SHARED R&I PATH

During work package 1 (WPT1), initially led by the Ministry of Education Science and Sport of Slovenia, and from October 2020 by University of Milan, A-RING partners have engaged in an extensive consultation process with representatives of the triple helix, Action Group 1 of EUSALP and EC-JRC.

Data gathering and analysis highlighted that, indeed, the Alpine Region shares **important R&I topics**: Digitalisation and **digital transformation**, including topics such as transformation of production and artificial intelligence; **Sustainability**, with special focus on circular economy, renewable energy and clean production; **Smart Mobility**.

To strengthen the cooperation efforts, several improvements are needed with particular regard to: communication, financing, simplification of procedures and setting up of safe cooperation environments.

The **Blueprint for an Alpine Region Research and Innovation Shared Agenda** will be the ultimate output of WPT1, collecting and capitalising on the meetings, workshops and laboratories that involved all relevant stakeholders in R&I processes and studies in all three work packages.

If you want to learn more about these project's results, three deliverables have been completed and are publicly available:

- [Alpine dialogues & interaction toolbox](#): this toolbox aims at collecting useful techniques to organize transnational events, fostering shared innovation processes;
- [S3/RIS Policy report](#): the report identifies the topics that can be used for interregional cooperation in Alpine regions, starting from the current EU Strategy;
- [Transnational report on R&I](#): this document highlights the current and future R&I topics of interest in the Alpine Space.

CO-CREATION PROCESS WITH ACADEMIA AND SMES

Public Authorities (PAs) are at the core of Work Package 2 (WPT2), led by Lombardy Region, which main aim is to develop a joint transnational approach for national, regional and local PAs, in order to consolidate research results into R&I policies supporting Smart Specialisation.

The **Alpine S3 Lab** methodology has been tested in three regions. Three tools have been developed to support the laboratories: Alpine Transnational Live Learning Sessions; Policy Pilot Live Scenarios; S3 Implementation Webinars. Moreover, a set of keywords and discussion topics have been identified for the implementation of the labs. The wish of the consortium is that the **Alpine S3 Lab becomes a tool** that EUSALP's Action Group 1 can adopt and make available **for all 48 Alpine Regions, to foster cooperation between PAs on different levels and with different stakeholders**.

The laboratories will be further tested and the resulting recommendations will be collected in the **Policy Briefs**, the final output of WPT2, which will consist in a collection of recommendations, for a synergic and complementary collaboration, to boost development of Alpine Region's small and medium enterprises.

One deliverable has already been produced under this work package:

- [Alpine S3 Lab setup](#): the methodology behind the setting-up of a safe-space for PAs to work together on topics related to their RIS3.

With evidence-based S3, WPT2 will anticipate and fast-track regulations focused on shared topics of Alpine Region importance, necessary to promote a joint S3 approach to generate overall benefits for the entire Alpine community.

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Polo in compositi per il settore automotive, packaging e costruzioni

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SECTION 3 – A-RING EVENTS

➤ Update on A-RING last event, held on 22.04.2021:

Held in partnership between the University of Milan and Confindustria Belluno Dolomiti, the first Matchmaking-Parley and Seed-Lab took place virtually, on the Zoom platform. The main objective was to discuss the most relevant topics for S3 in the Alpine regions, and to launch a creative process, to generate **innovative ideas for goods and services in the Alps**.

Despite the limits of online networking and exchanges, participants were particularly engaged and contributed to the creative process with a great number of ideas, that have been freely added and collected on an interactive board. The topic receiving the highest attention was that of Artificial Intelligence (AI), since its applications are flexible and can address many different issues. In particular, it has been stressed the usefulness of AI in creating systems for monitoring extreme weather events, and their impact on mobility and infrastructures, to the benefit of public administration,s, enterprises,, research centres and citizens..

➤ In May 2021, the following events will take place:

- Matchmaking parley and Seed Lab Exchange Visit (FRANCE, 6/05/2021);
- Matchmaking parley (AUSTRIA, 18/05/2021);

➤ In June 2021, the following events will take place:

- Matchmaking parley and Seed Lab Exchange Visit (SLOVENIA, 01/06/2021);
- Alpine Transnational Live Learning (SLOVENIA, 15/06/2021);
- Seed Lab Exchange Visit (AUSTRIA, 17/06/2021).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE OR THE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

A-RING website: <https://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/a-ring/en/home>

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/a-ring-interreg-alpine-space-49836a1b8

Twitter: [@RingAlpine](https://twitter.com/RingAlpine)

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Polo in compendiate del consorzio, gestione di comunità

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TAKE A LOOK AT THE A-RING PARTNERHISP AND PROJECT DETAILS

Project partners	Country
University of Milan	Italy
Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences	Austria
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport	Slovenia
University of Ljubljana (Faculty of Public Administration)	Slovenia
University of Applied Sciences Kempten	Germany
Hochschule Konstanz University of Applied Sciences	Germany
Regionalmanagement Burgenland GmbH	Austria
Industrial enterprises Association of Belluno Province	Italy
Lombardy Region	Italy
Polymeris, French competitiveness cluster for rubbers, plastics and composites industry	France
USI Università della Svizzera Italiana	Switzerland

PROJECT DETAILS

Funding	Duration
Total eligible budget: 1.350.583 EUR	Project start date: 01/10/2019
ERDF co-financing: 1.147.996 EUR	Project end date: 31/03/2022
Lead Partner	Communication support
University of Milan – UNIMONT CRC GeSDiMont	ALOT s.r.l.
Project Manager Giuseppe De Luca	E-mail: a-ring@alot.it
E-mail: giuseppe.deluca@unimi.it	
University of Milan (UMIL)	

PRIVACY UPDATE - GENERAL PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR).

We are updating our mailing list in accordance with the new data protection regulations which come into force on 25 May 2018 in compliance with the Alpine Space Programme website legal notice (<https://www.alpine-space.eu/legal-notice>). Please note that we have never given our list to anyone, marketing operator or other, and that the data in our possession may contain only name, organization, e-mail address and sometimes also phone number, used only to address updates to you regarding information and news and / or events and invitations. If you want to stay in touch with us and be updated on various initiatives, you do not need to do anything, but if you do not want to receive our information, you can send an e-mail reply simply indicating "no thanks" in the subject, and your e-mail address will be deleted from our mailing list. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation and we cordially greet you. This publication only reflects the author's views and that the programme authorities are not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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