



Vanguard Initiative High Level Directors meeting – 28 June 2018 Press release

The Vanguard Initiative welcomes European Commission's commitment to Smart Specialisation in the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027

Directors from the 32 Vanguard Initiative regions today joined in welcoming the European Commission's continued advancement of Smart Specialisation approaches in its future budget.

On the occasion of its annual Directors meeting on 28 June 2018, the Vanguard Initiative regions took stock of the European Commission's proposals for the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and related sectoral regulations.

Since its establishment 4 years ago, the Vanguard Initiative has been successful in putting its key political messages high on the EU agenda. The Vanguard Initiative's model of interregional collaboration along industrial value chains, based on smart specialisation principles, has been up-scaled as a model for EU policies, notably through the Smart Specialisation Thematic Platforms.

Vanguard Initiative welcomes the new proposals from the Commission which aim to further develop this approach, by removing obstacles and providing appropriate funding solutions. In particular we are pleased to note the new Interreg component 'Interregional Innovation Investments' inspired by the Vanguard Initiative experience.

The Vanguard Initiative network remains fully committed to pursuing a constructive dialogue with European Institutions in order to continue our joint endeavours further towards collaborative and competitive successes for all EU regions and smooth implementation of those proposals.



ANNEX

WHAT IS VANGUARD INITIATIVE

Industrial Innovation initiative driven by the **political commitment of regions** to promote the **industrial renaissance of Europe with the final goal of creating growth and jobs**. Vanguard use Smart Specialisation as coordination principle for Interregional Cooperation to **align strategic investments**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slpqJ5OSJoQ>

A NETWORK OF MORE THAN 30 REGIONS - Vanguard Initiative launched in November 2013, thanks to an agreement between 10 European regions, now in an ASBL with more than 30 active members. Today we are collecting the first results of the hard work undertaken in the past 4 years, involving clusters, knowledge centres and companies.

www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu

THE MILAN DECLARATION formalise the political commitment of regions to lead by example, using **smart specialisation** to boost **innovation driven co-investments and bottom-up entrepreneurial innovation** supported by **clusters**. This political declaration engage regions in **interregional collaboration** to promote **European Smart Specialisation Platforms**, to leverage **public-private investments** and to **combine funding mechanisms**. Regions also commit to engage in the **strategic dialogue with the EU institutions**.

http://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/sites/default/files/contact/image/final_declaration_of_milan_final_27_10.pdf

INNOVATIVE GLOBAL COMPETITIVE VALUE CHAINS

Vanguard aims at creating **new value chains** building on the competitive advantages and complementarities of different EU regions. A **bottom-up approach**, based on **cluster facilitation** and **industrial engagement** is key to connect significant stakeholders in different regions and countries.

VANGUARD METHODOLOGY & THEMATIC SMART SPECIALISATION PLATFORMS

A 4-step methodology (Learn, Connect, Demonstrate and Commercialise/Uptake) developed together with EC and tested in the framework of 5 Pilot Projects, has inspired the creation of European Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms on Industrial Modernisation, Energy and Agro-Food where Vanguard is playing an important role. <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/s3-thematic-platforms>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7h5I6vvrkZY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixDAKGapaUc>

PILOT PROJECTS AND DEMONSTRATION CASES

- Five pilot projects (**Bio-Economy, Efficient and Sustainable Manufacturing, High Performance Production through 3D-Printing, Advanced Manufacturing for Energy in Harsh Environments, New Nano-enabled Products**) challenge driven or technology driven, represent the current framework for cooperation.

Around **30 industry-led demo cases** aggregate communities of regional stakeholders (large companies, SMEs, RTOs and knowledge centres) testing and implementing the Vanguard methodology. Pilots and demo cases, facilitated by **clusters**, are expected to deliver **a pipeline of industrial innovative investments** with a significant economic, social and environmental impact. Vanguard pilots are also part of the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms. Other “Vanguard labelled pilots” could emerge in the future.

FOCUS ON THE MARKET UPTAKE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Vanguard aims at **bringing new technologies faster to the market, speeding up technology deployment in EU industry and connecting demonstration infrastructures in the regions, Vanguard facilitate SME access to these infrastructures**. The focus lies on ‘**demonstrators**’, i.e. technology deployment for new applications at post-prototyping level (>TRL5). The ultimate goal is not only to speed up new technologies uptake, but also to better align regional eco-systems and increase efficiency.

Both for the cooperation projects and the demonstration infrastructures we aim at **establishing structural and sustainable financial co-investment solutions**, to which private sector and public authorities (regional, national and European) can/must contribute.