



Reinforce the access of the Outermost Regions in the European Research Area

Press Release - FORWARD Final Conference Results : June 13th 2022

The European Research and Innovation program in the ORs

FORWARD is the first European project gathering the 9 outermost regions: Azores, Canary Islands, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Madeira, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island, Saint-Martin.

The Forward project aims at increasing the participation of these regions in the European calls of the Horizon Europe program for Research and Innovation and in the European framework program in general.

FORWARD Consortium joined for its final meeting on June 2nd at the Royal Library of Belgium. Mr Antonio Lopez Gulias, Project Coordinator ACIISI put in light this key moment summarizing all progresses and specially the new European Commission communication. Indeed, this official document of may 3rd 2022, proposed the continuation of Forward activities.

The main results of Forward have to be highlighted. FORWARD has enabled the nine ORs to get to know each other better and to share their assets in terms of research and innovation, to exchange on their potential as "living natural laboratories" through the eight thematic working groups. Composed of experts in biodiversity, health, agriculture, climate change, energy transition, earth sciences, marine sciences, information and communication technology, these groups have led to the creation of 9 regional action plans, the submission of two proposals to the Horizon Europe program's calls for health and marine sciences projects.

Thanks to the FORWARD project, the actors of the ORs have benefited from training on writing proposals, implementation, technical, administrative and financial management of a Horizon Europe project in order to strengthen their capacity to respond to calls for proposals, and mobilities for their researchers.

In addition, the continuation of the FORWARD program, 2019-2022 has been included in the 26th declaration of the Conference of ORs Presidents held in the Azores on 18 and 19 November 2021. It is also worth noting the strong act of the nine local authorities of the ORs who have signed nine letters of intent to commit to the next OR-izon Network.

To implement the continuation of Forward, a debate will be organized within the consortium on the basis of the main results of each work package to set up the next steps of the future project. Several proposals have already been made ; the sustainability of thematic working groups, maintain ORs solidarity and knowledge of our strengths for a strategic networking approach and opportunities with big consortia.

The Outermost Regions (ORs) play a strategic role for a smart and innovative Europe. FORWARD contributes to optimize the research and innovation ecosystems of the ORs, by developing distinctive expertise and connecting them to international networks.

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MORE INFORMATION ON FORWARD

The FORWARD project: Fostering research excellence in the 9 outermost regions

The main objectives of the FORWARD project are:

- To improve the research excellence of the ORs and their innovation potential in order to strengthen their participation in EU research and innovation funded projects and to link research activities to territorial development
- Facilitate collaboration and networking of representatives of the quadruple helix (university, SMEs, government, civil society) at the regional level, between ORs and with their EU and third country counterparts at the international level.

The Project is based on a multi-stakeholder, multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach. This approach has been developed with the aim of bringing together organizations involved in several areas of research and innovation that may be different in terms of context, expertise and skills to ensure the robustness of the measures and actions that will be implemented throughout the project.

The research and innovation potential of the ORs in a few words :

- Atmospheric sciences and climate change
- Knowledge and protection of terrestrial and marine biodiversity
- The circular economy
- Energy transition
- Space sciences
- Bio-resources

The 24 partners of FORWARD



FORWARD coordinator :
GOBIERNO DE CANARIAS (GOBCAN)
Coordinator, Antonio LOPEZ GULIAS



FUNDO REGIONAL PARA A
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DE MARTINIQUE (CTM)



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