

The Significance of ERDF Support for the Regional Innovation System in the State of Bremen

Seminar “Staying competitive in a changing world – Regional innovation and cohesion policies in present and future with the example of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen”



EUROPÄISCHE UNION:
Investition in Ihre Zukunft
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Investition in Bremens Zukunft



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Need to assist structural change with the help of economic policy because of persisting structural problems and new challenges

- The socio-economic situation in Bremen shows that structural problems persist in various sectors.
- In addition, Bremen continuously has to cope with new *challenges* to ensure and enhance their competitiveness in global competition:
 - globalisation,
 - energy security,
 - climate protection,
 - demographic change.
- There are still necessities for an economic policy.

Bremen focus on the Lisbon Strategy and on fostering its regional innovation system through ERDF interventions

Global objective		Improving regional competitiveness and resulting viable jobs	
PRIORITY AXIS 1 <i>Promoting growth Developing innovations and knowledge</i>	Intermediate objectives		PRIORITY AXIS 2 <i>Activating urban areas for living and doing business in</i>
	<i>Knowledge-based commerce in a diversified economic structure</i>	<i>Expand and safeguard competitive urban structures</i>	
<i>strand</i>	Specific objectives		<i>strand</i>
<i>1. Innovative technologies</i>	<i>Increase R&D in companies</i>	<i>Strengthen the ability of neighbourhood areas to function</i>	<i>1. Neighbourhood centres, commercial sites</i>
<i>2. Transfer of knowledge and technology</i>	<i>Foster transfer of knowledge and technology</i>	<i>Integrate technology sites into the urban spatial structure</i>	<i>2. Urban economic areas with particular potential</i>
<i>3. Corporate efficiency and adaptability</i>	<i>Increase opportunities for bringing innovations to the market</i>	<i>Enhance image of urban structures</i>	<i>3. Enhance image of cities of Bremen and Bremerhaven</i>
<i>4. Support for corporate investment</i>	<i>Further diversification of corporate and sectoral structure</i>		
Cross-sectoral objectives		Equal opportunities	
Environment			

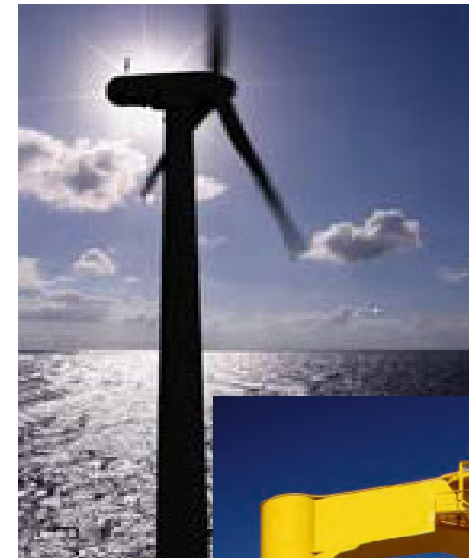
94,8 Mio. €
66,8 %



72,8 % of granted financial resources committed to the intervention area “research and technological development, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship”

Fields of excellence in Bremen and strategic supporting areas

- Fields of excellence
 - innovative materials for the aerospace sector,
 - blue biotechnology and
 - offshore wind energy.
- Strategic areas for the support of the wind energy industry in Bremen
 - manufacturing, assembly and storage areas for foundations,
 - towers,
 - nacelles and blades.



Measures of the ERDF interventions in the wind energy industry

- Commerce-related infrastructure (e.g. upgrading Luneort to cope with heavy loads)
- Research establishments (e.g. establishment of the Fraunhofer Institute for Wind Energy and Energy System Technology (IWES))
- Co-operative and collaborative R&D projects (e.g. via the AUF Applied Environmental Research Program and the PFAU Program to Support Applied Environmental Technologies)
- Support for individual companies (e.g. on the basis of the Joint Scheme to Improve the Regional Economic Structure)
- Transfer infrastructure and networks (e.g. establishment of the Bremerhaven Wind Energy Agency (WAB))



R&D-projects in the wind energy sector financed by ERDF

- With the support of ERDF funds co-operative research and development projects between research institutes and companies based in the region were financed.
- R&D-projects address research topics like
 - thermal imaging for the early detection of damage on offshore wind energy converters,
 - development of a special maritime corrosion protection concept,
 - electron beam welding for offshore wind energy converters
 - development of a robot based offshore service system.

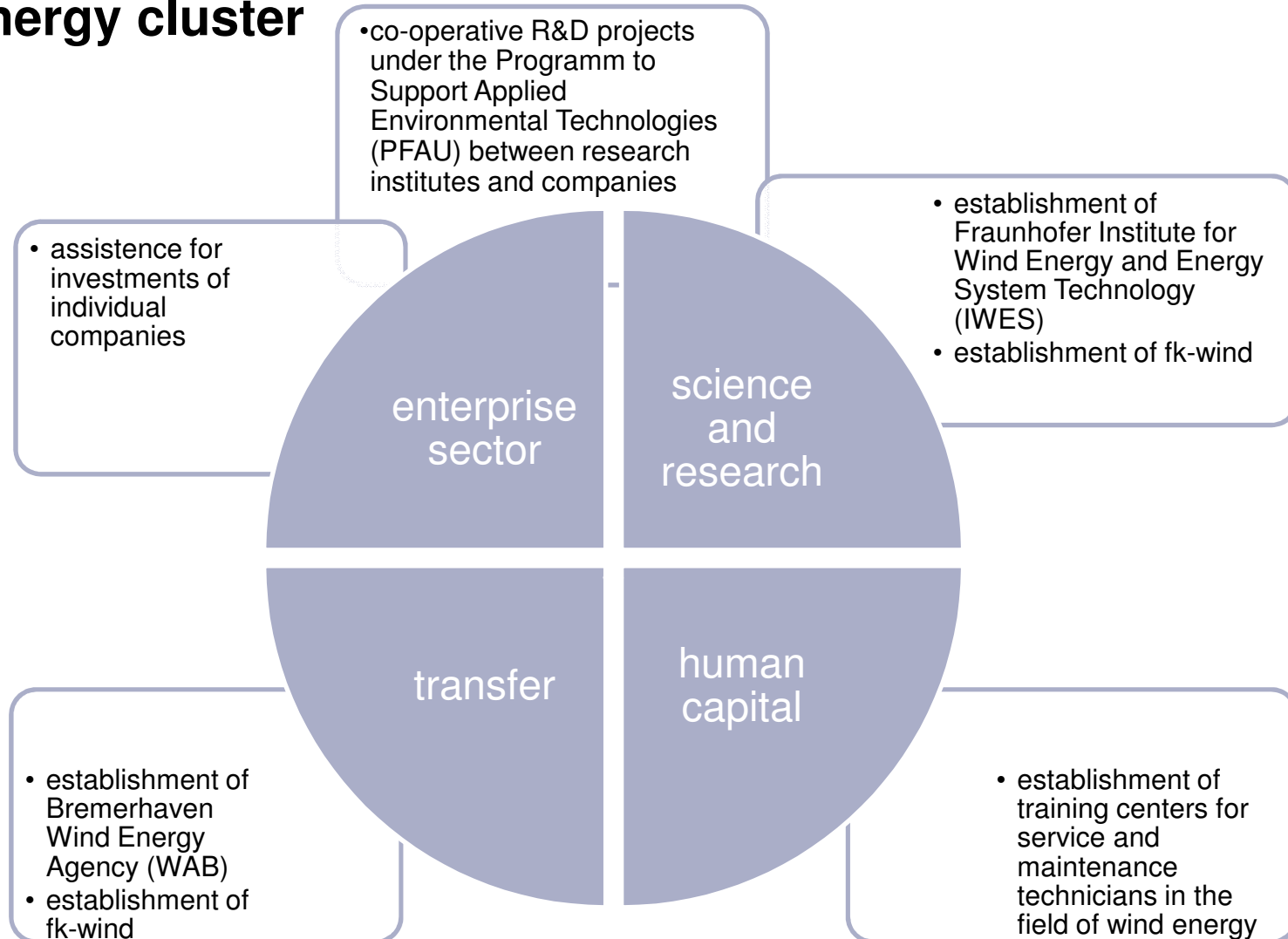


In order to address the different needs of different stakeholders and different stages of development a broad range of instruments is needed.

- R&D projects to facilitate the transmission of scientific research into products, services or processes
 - equip a player of the regional innovation system with special research infrastructure so that it can offer adequate scientific assistance to the other stakeholders
 - transfer infrastructure to strengthen the regional innovation system
 - dissolve a bottleneck in physical infrastructure that impedes further development of an industry
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- Therefore it is important to have an ample tool box from which you can always choose the most suitable instrument to support the development of a regional innovation system according to the needs of the stakeholders and their current stage of development.



Targeting all stakeholders of a regional innovation system in wind energy cluster



Role of planning system and project selection procedures in the ERDF and Framework Program

- multiannual nature of ERDF
 - multiannual nature of ERDF support helped to ensure continuity and stability
 - evolving support under the ERDF permitted the initiation of a sustainable development
- a centrally organized program does not offer the same advantages for strengthening a regional innovation system
 - not offer the continuity needed to follow a long-term development strategy
 - difficult to participate for SME in the Framework Program
 - the regional potential cannot be promoted as closely under the Framework Program
- Framework Program is therefore an excellent complementary funding source but can't replace ERDF

Factors behind the success of the ERDF support

- capacity to address all groups of stakeholders of the regional innovation system
- ample tool box of instruments to address different needs
- evolutionary/evolving support at the time of need
- multiannual support horizon
- decentrally organized project selection and grant system suitable for SME
- launch function
- focus on developing endogenous regional potential

Conclusion

- In Bremen the ERDF support played a vital launch role for the offshore wind energy industry and the development of the regional innovation system.
- The ERDF support proved to be capable of bringing out endogenous regional potential.
- The ERDF assistance effectively pursues the European objectives of the Lisbon Strategies.
- It generates an European added value.
- A continuation of the RCE programs in the context of the cohesion policy is highly recommended.
- Just like “Why abandon a system that has proven itself to be working?” Better improve it incrementally.

Thank you very much for your attention!



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