The CRISI Project aims at providing an improved understanding of cross-border regional cooperation in terms of how different types of proximity and the integration of cross-border regional innovation systems (CBRIS) impact on knowledge transfer and innovation in SMEs.

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The first work package has generated the following empirically and theoretically informed ideas and policy suggestions:

- The promotion of socio-economic, and in particular the socio-cultural development of cross-border regions, is highly significant for achieving the cohesion and cooperation goals of the EU and its neighbours i.e. for facilitating interaction potentially leading to innovations.

- The long-term innovative and competitive success of cross-border regions largely depends on their ability to create shared innovation systems.

- There are positive outcomes and synergies to be gained from cross-border R&D collaboration, since new innovations emerge from enough but not too much difference.

- The differences – for example in terms of language, technical expertise, laws, cultural habits and norms – commonly observed across a border can create barriers for effective cross-border innovation cooperation.
  
  o However, these differences should be embraced, since they have the potential to lead to new combinations of knowledge and ways of doing things and, thus, to radically new innovations.

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1 Cross-Border Regional Innovation System Integration -Project (CRISI -Project)
• When looking for innovation cooperation partners the adjacent side of the border is often bypassed, resulting in under-used innovation capacity
  o The strengthening of the links between actors across the border will increase the innovation capacity of the border region as a whole

• In many intra-EU border regions, the border itself is not a substantial barrier, but the possibilities for cross-border integration have not been fully utilized off and have, remained under-utilized
  o When the border is a physical barrier or a barrier related to laws and regulations, the situation can be addressed and exploited relatively easily by targeted policy measures such as developing better transport infrastructure and bridging cross-border actors

• However, there are no “one-size-fits-all” solutions for developing cross-border innovation cooperation
  o The simple cloning of regional development strategies from other regions, and becoming obsessed with buzzwords from the development rhetoric, should be avoided
  o Instead, regionally specific contexts – such as local infrastructure, business culture and administrative/regulative institutions – should always be taken into account when planning cross-border development policies

Further reading:

Links:
Marie curie actions: http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/
CRISI-project webpage: http://www.surrey.ac.uk/shtm/research/projects/Economic/knowledge_transfer_in_cross_borderRegional_innovation_systems.htm

The next CRISI-Project Policy Briefing will be published in early 2016

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