



1. The UNI/PdR 27:2017 Guidelines for management and processes development for responsible innovation

The tool was developed by three organisations: the Centre for Innovation and Economic Development (CISE), the Italian Association for Industrial Design (AIRI) and the Italian National Standardisation Organisation (UNI).

The **main aim** of the tool is to support SMEs in all stages of their life cycle to develop and achieve growth and engage in innovation. Moreover to increasing resource-efficiency, green growth and eco-innovation and environmental performance management.

To be an integral part of a company's business model, RI needs to move from the company-culture level to that of practice and be embedded into the actual innovation process. Given the domain (innovation), a systematic approach is needed that, while being consistent, coherent and comprehensive, allows flexibility in devising solutions: the former UGO management system, now UNI/PdR 27:2017 is a set of requirements and guidelines to support identification of solutions, and not a tool box. The guidelines provide a set of requirements businesses should implement (through specific/original management and operational solutions and practices) to manage their innovation processes, according to the principles of responsible innovation, including stakeholder engagement, risk prevention and/or precautionary principle, social and environmental sustainability, economic and financial sustainability.

The guidelines also stress the importance of indicators and of communication processes, to ensure governance and openness. The guidelines provide a reference for assessment and third-party certification. The guidelines provide a management and benchmarking reference, and specifically account for stakeholder engagements, therefore all quadruple-helix actors benefit from their implementation: companies, public bodies and other institutions, academia and researchers, consumers/users and citizens.

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UNI/PdR 27:2017 is a **set of requirements**, thus it provides indications on elements/concerns to be addressed and principles to be complied with in addressing them. It does not provide solutions, nor methodologies to address such concerns, while abiding by such principles. Guidance for implementation of UNI/PdR in specific industrial context



is missing, as it should be generated as a result of pilot implementation over the next months.

Enterprises, institutions and citizens belong to the **main target groups** of the tool. It helps enterprises to define a methodology to generate innovation taking in considerations stakeholders and societal expectations. In case of institutions it can be useful in selecting companies for partnership and use public funding to support enterprises that really improve quality of life. For citizens the tool helps to recognize the company that has a robust and genuine responsible approach to innovation.

Although the **timeline for implementation** depends on the specific organisational characteristics and status quo, on average a six-month period should be allowed to design the RI management system and start its implementation. Ideally, the system should be completely reassessed after a 3-year period, to check its maturity and durable results.

At the moment there is no formal training process or other means for the knowledge transfer. The practice is for everybody to try and implement and provide feedback on its usability.

Starting from 2012 CISE carried out a pilot with 5 Italian enterprises to test the UGO standard. The enterprises belonged to the chemical, mechanical and manufacturing industries. In particular, one of them is a pre-eminent and innovative firm producing bio-plastic. The pilot generated feedback for the validation and implementation of the UGO standard and was the chance to start up a cooperation with AIRI and UNI. In 2016, the former standard UGO became an official reference practice, after months of intense exchange and review. According to UNI and CEN regulations “practices” are pre-normative documents that are freely available to all stakeholders for evaluation. UNI/PdR 27:2017 was published in March 2017 and is available for free downloading, consultation, evaluation and application. At the moment more than 200 downloads are registered on UNI’s database. The practice will be available for 5 years. At the end of this period, if the tool proved to meet stakeholders’ expectations, UNI will evaluate the chance to start a normative path to develop a national standard.

The **main strength** of the tool is that voluntary standards/sets of requirements provide common reference allowing comparison and benchmarking, ideally moving competition forward by raising the bar above compliance with current mandatory regulation. This also supports clear communication and effective engagement with stakeholders. Furthermore the voluntary standards/set of requirements provide internal tools to plan, implement and



assess processes and their improvement, by means of clearly identified strategic and operational approaches, thus building internal intelligence.

In contrast the **main weakness** of the tool is that the standards are designed to be widely implemented to trigger a benchmarking effect, as well as a “market regulation” effect. Unfortunately, the scale of application of the former UGO standar as well as the UNI/PdR 27:2017 is still very small.

The **main challenge** of the tool is that - although disseminated by means of events, publications, and even support for initial implementation - the guidelines do not go beyond their experimental phase, thus having no real impact in terms of competition. Of course, they would still deliver benefits to companies implementing them, but the wider goal of main-streaming RI would be missed. It would be advisable to be able to work on a large scale when disseminating the guidelines, or - at least - to be able to create a convincing business case for it, supported by story-telling at EU level. Further challenges are more generally affecting the dissemination of RI in general:

- Lack of a business culture truly inspired by sustainable development goals and societal challenges;
- Current low awareness of responsible innovation principles, benefits and challenges, resulting on all quadruple-helix players not being prepared to effectively cooperate at innovation process level;
- Need for a medium-long term perspective, that is not common among SMEs, representing the clear majority of EU enterprises;
- The discussion on RRI is still ongoing and does not offer a definitive reference framework for enterprises and a clear business case;
- Lack of clear political support to responsibility in innovation.

Evidence of success of the management system for responsible innovation consists in its validation by five enterprises and by its evolution into the current official reference practice UNI/PdR 27:2017 (UNI is the Italian member of ISO and reference practices are validated and published by UNI on its web-site for businesses, practitioners and all other stakeholders to analyse, test and comment them in view of a possible setting up of standardisation committee). At the time being, the practice - although having being published - has not been officially launched yet, therefore there is no evidence from the consultation process.



Webpage of the tool: http://catalogo.uni.com/pdr/pub/uni_pdr_27_2017.pdf

English version (unofficial):

http://www.fc.camcom.it/download/uni_pdr_27_2017_EN.pdf?DWN=15977

Some publications and reference that describe the tool:

- M. Chiocca, L. Valli a cura di, L'innovazione responsabile, Vol. I Princìpi, Roma 2013
- M. Chiocca, L. Valli a cura di, L'innovazione responsabile, Vol. III Strumenti, Roma 2014
- M. Chiocca, L. Valli a cura di, L'innovazione responsabile, Vol. II Contesti, (to be published digitally)
- Guidelines for Management and Processes Development for Responsible Innovation (UNI/PdR 27:2017)
- AIRI, a cura di, Primo Report sulla Ricerca e l'Innovazione responsabile, Paper 2015.