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1) Stocktaking of national/regional priorities and linkages with policy measures implemented/planned on their basis.

- Will the national/regional priorities be revised to refine the S3 strategy and/or to adapt to new market conditions and the global context?

The Tuscany RIS3 governance and monitoring system envisaged that, beside the ordinary collection of output indicators, a mid term review (MTR) of the Strategy would be conducted in 2018¹. So during the 2018 the EDP activities previously conducted in 2013-14 have been carried out again and stakeholders have been asked to revise existing roadmaps and occasionally to detect new strategic investments opportunities, accordingly to the technological progress, the new market conditions and the growth dynamics of territories.

When drafting the first version of RIS3, Innovation Poles and Technological Districts had been involved by being asked to organise scouting workshops with enterprises, research and tech transfer centres, according to specific rules of engagement. Similarly during the 2018 MTR, they have been asked to discuss again together with enterprises and research and tech-transfer centres new investments opportunities.

During the MTR, much focus has been dedicated to interregional opportunities and the territorial cohesion dimensions.

For the first issue new roadmaps have been discussed also in terms of interregional positioning with regards to Foreign Direct Investments, Horizon 2020 calls for proposals as well as in terms of global value chains.

For the second issue a "Territorial Proofing"² of expected impacts of the roadmaps has been conducted with a special focus, on the one hand, on the correlation of the new roadmaps to territorial value chains, on the other, on the analysis of territorial endowments able to affect the implementation effectiveness at territorial level.

The revision of roadmaps has led to a special focus on the way KETs can be applied to specific application domains. The first version of RIS3 relied on 3 technological priorities - mainly related to KETs - and composed of technological roadmaps. Although maintaining the structure based on technological priorities and roadmaps, the new version of the Strategy now includes also 5 application domains, focussing on the implementation of tech roadmaps in specific fields³.

¹ For the MTR webpage (in Italian): http://www.regione.toscana.it/porcreo-fesr-2014-2020/archivio-news/-/asset_publisher/ZXGDgeO8IC6U/content/strategia-di-specializzazione-intelligente-in-toscana-verifica-e-revisione

² We considered the "Territorial Proofing" as a synthesis of "Territorial Impact Assessment" and "Rural Proofing" with the aim of providing a place evidence contribution on the relevance of strategic roadmaps and their expected impacts at territorial level.

³ For instance, within the priority "IC-Photonics", the first version of the RIS3 foresaw a roadmap related to "airspace photonics solutions"; in the MTR version, within the application domain "Agrifood", there has been a wider discussion on airspace photonics solutions regarding the earth observation for agrifood.

- How does consistency/coherence between the regional S3 priorities and related policy measures is being assessed? What data collection methods are being used? What is the role/involvement of regional stakeholders in the process?

The S3 conditionality has been applied to all calls for proposals operating in TO1 and in part of TO3. Only projects fostering the RIS3 roadmap have been considered as eligible and admitted to the second step of assessment (a technical assessment) for final selection.

Ordinarily results, output and financial indicators are collected from the monitoring system of the ROPs directly implementing the Strategy, i.e. ERDF and EARDF. Beneficiaries are called upon to insert data on the monitoring informative systems; when specific data (other than the compulsory ones) required for evaluation activities are missing, a semantic analysis is conducted. During the EDP (both during the initial designing of the Strategy and during the MTR phase) specific engagement rules have been given to stakeholders.

Moreover regional innovation stakeholders are directly involved within the governance of the Strategy (namely, “the S3 Observatory”). The main ones, the “Technological Districts”, have been engaged within the EDP both when designing the Strategy and when updating it during the MTR. The composition of S3 Observatory has been recently enlarged to territorial public institutions representatives and LAGs FLAGs and EIPs representatives. Monitoring committees of EARDF RDP and ERDF ROP have been involved when adopting the MTR version of the Strategy.

- What complementary policy measures may need to be contemplated (policy roadmapping) in order to boost the impact of S3?

Within the current programming period there has been a strong regulatory focus on EAC fulfilment and much less on the implementation. On one side this has led to better chances to customize strategies implementation accordingly to regional needs; on the other side the lack of terms of references⁴ has led to a greater attention to regional programmes rather than on strategies.

A stronger connection among different regional programmes and different EU funding instruments would boost the impact of the Strategy.

The lack of an autonomous budget leads to a governance system very much ERDF oriented and sometimes it's difficult to involve other programmes and funds⁵.

In particular, for instance, there could be the opportunity to extend the focus of RIS3 also to sustainable development goals, or at least to increase the coherence among policies involved in SDGs and innovation policies, underneath the scheme of Smart Specialisation Strategy⁶. Similarly the same could be proposed for policies regarding education, mobility,

⁴ The lack of regulatory provisions with regards to the monitoring and the implementation of RIS3 (indicators, data collection, taxonomies) has led Regions and Member States to carry out those tasks as part of ordinary programme requirements (monitoring, evaluation, communication...), mainly of the ERDF, making it difficult to implement a wider governance, integrate other funds and programmes, or promoting dedicated communication activities.

⁵ The lack of an autonomous budget for RIS3 technical assistance has led regions to carry on RIS3 activities through ERDF technical assistance resources and the ERDF management schemes.

⁶ In order to be really “smart” and to take up innovation dynamics, regional innovation strategies have to encompass not only European Structural and Investments Funds (including EARDF) but also other EU policy instruments, recognising “innovation” as a key driver for integrated sustainable development approaches. To this extent, main

health, public services etc... all of them, to a certain extent, horizontal and infrastructural interventions able maximize the effectiveness of RIS3 policies.

- What do you see as important critical junctures on the road ahead?

The main challenge in our perspective is to enforce the regional governance of the Strategy. S3 paradigm has very ambitious goals but has to cope with strict regulations with regards to EU funds, different management, monitoring and control system and above all a rapid and continuous change of the present context and of future scenarios.

A consistent governance, able to detect strategic investments in a very effective and rapid way is the main challenge ahead. Shared mechanism of monitoring, managing and controlling between Strategies and Regional Programmes could be promoted to foster a better alignment among them, as very often they end with being misleading or sometimes even merely duplicated.

For the next programming period (ref to the connection with the European semester, the 5+2 annual scheme, the importance of interregional partnerships...) the attempt to enforce the regional governance as an efficient mechanism to detect opportunities and take decisions should be at the core of the EDP, to be intended as an ongoing process involving main innovation stakeholders.

references for instance could regard energy saving incentives to firms as well as circular economy applications, very often, both of them very much related to industry 4.0 technological solutions. Other examples could regard smart city and urban innovation interventions, very much related to well-being dynamics.

Within this perspective RIS3 could have a wider holistic dimension, including not only innovation policies but also other regional development policies.

2) How does your country/region plan/propose to assess the impact of S3 (beyond checking the levels of output/indicators proposed)?

- For instance, changes in terms of funding decisions, or in terms of policymakers' and stakeholders' behaviour?

Checking the impact of RIS3 is indeed very difficult, for reasons related to the timing of innovation policies and for the fact that the Strategy involves only part of the innovation funding.

Moreover a general upgrade of the technological level of the regional system must somehow be expected and in order to assess the impact of the Strategy, the technological progress, due to the diffusion of new standards must be taken into account and.

Having said that, evaluation initiatives will be carried out with regards to the behaviour of beneficiaries to investigate whether there has been an uptake or an acceleration in scaling-up innovation, if there are some path creation dynamics and if those new paths can be associated to the Strategy, in a counterfactual perspective⁷.

Similarly we are also interested in understanding the potential not encountered by the Strategy.

- And more broadly and importantly, towards the regional economic transformation that S3 is promoting?

A special attention will be paid on whether the outcomes lead to a better positioning in global markets, if they stimulated innovation uptake also among other companies (other than beneficiaries) for instance within the supply chains or open up new opportunities along newly created value chains (within or outside the regional boundaries)⁸.

Similarly we are interested in territorial cohesion, so evaluation activities will be conducted to check if innovation outcomes help filling gaps as well as increase partnership among territories.⁹

⁷ Behavioural changes needs to be investigated within a counterfactual perspective, in order to avoid biases coming from the limited amount of resources as well as the ordinary diffusion of mainstream technologies that could have been implemented even without the provisions of the regional RIS3. Within this perspective we are very much interested on new path creation dynamics, on one side, and in scaling up innovation for existing paths, on the other.

With regards to the latter (scaling-up innovation) we are interested in the implementation of research results in new product and processes, as well as in the possible diffusion of them within existing supply chains.

With regards to new path creation we are interested in new business areas activated by beneficiaries as a consequence of regional funding related to RIS3, with special attention, for instance, to new business model detected, new industry research partnerships enhanced as well as new competences and skills required. Another important topic within this perspective is the analysis of entrepreneurship dynamics related to main technological roadmaps. Industry space approached could be implemented to analyse sectorial co-occurrences and correlation with new enterprises activated.

⁸ With regards to regional economic transformation, we would focus much more on outcomes rather than output, analysing industry performance in international value chains. Similarly qualitative analysis could be implemented evaluating the contribution of the strategy to leader firms within specific industries.

⁹ During the MTR and within the ex-ante perspective an impact assessment on the expected outcomes has been conducted with relation to the potential application of specific roadmaps at territorial level. An ex post analysis will be conducted with data coming from the implementation of the programmes supporting the RIS3.

The same approach has been adopted by the MTR of the Strategy and that perspective will be carried out also at ex post stage.

On the basis of the localization of beneficiaries and applying input/output sub-regional tables, the structures of regional value chains will be investigated at territorial level, taking into consideration also supply chains and the commuting movements within labour market areas.