

SMART SPECIALISATION FOR THE RECOVERY

online workshop
15 April 2021

**Taking stock of the
implementation of Smart
Specialisation: Evidence and
Lessons Learned**

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#SmartSpecialisation



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Structure

- 
- A photograph of four miniature hiker figures standing on a topographic map. The figures are dressed in colorful outdoor gear: one in green, one in yellow, one in red, and one in orange. They are carrying backpacks and appear to be navigating the terrain. The map features brown contour lines and some numerical labels like '724'.
1. The **Real Implementation** of the Smart Specialisation methodology
 2. Empirical evidence: **Governance**
 3. Empirical evidence: **EDP**
 4. Empirical evidence: **Implementation measures**
 5. Empirical evidence: **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. The Real Implementation of the Smart Specialisation methodology

Key steps :

1. Analysis of regional context/potential
2. Governance
3. Vision for the future: EDP
4. Selection of priorities
5. Policy mix
6. Monitoring and evaluation



Analysing the evidence in key topics in the implementation of Smart Specialisation

1

EDP

- The **Entrepreneurial Discovery Process** guides public and private investment to the areas with potential meet the social and economic development goals of the territory

2

Governance

- When it comes to the sensitive moment of deciding on strategic priorities, a truly **inclusive RIS3 governance** structure should be able to prevent capture by specific interest groups, powerful lobbies, or major regional stakeholders.

3

Monitoring Evaluation

- **Monitoring** as: a system to gather and process information, a transparent crystallisation of the logic of intervention and a communication device
- **Evaluation** as: a way to reinforce our credibility, a communication device and provide confidence in the process.

4

Implementation measures

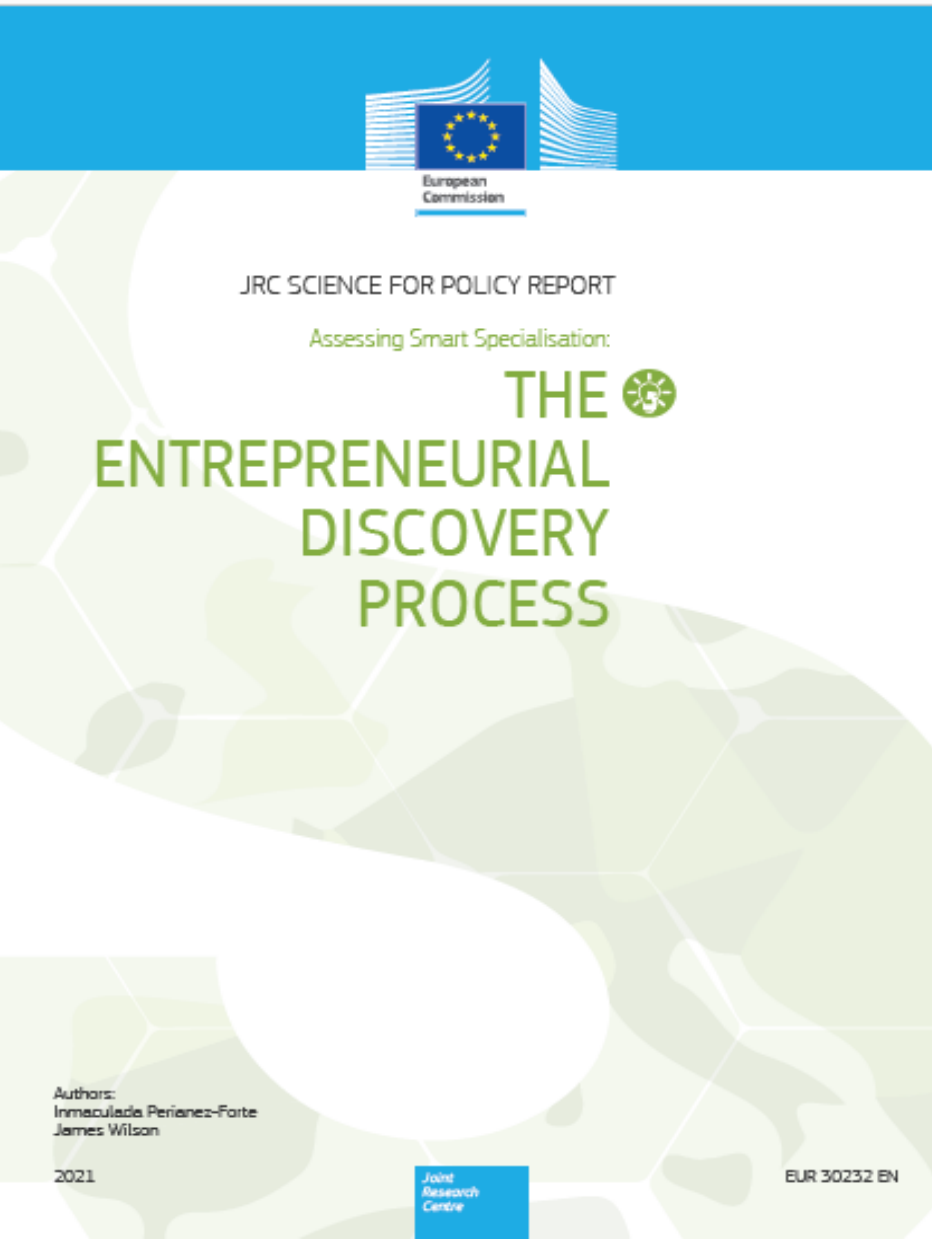
2. Empirical evidence: Governance



- Strengthened **networks of actors** and made the **decision-making process more inclusive**.
- The **institutional changes** have contributed to the production of a wide range of tangible and intangible collective goods.
- The effectiveness of **horizontal and vertical coordination** is still low.

Guzzo and Gianelle (2021) “Assessing Smart Specialisation: Governance”

3. Empirical evidence: EDP



- These processes remain highly **context-dependent**.
- Existing **institutions, culture and historical trajectory of innovation policy** influence their success.
- **Key factors:**
 - 1. Design/implement mechanisms** around the specificities of the regional context;
 - 2. Using digital forms of engagement;**
 - 3. Increase the use of dissemination tools.**

Periañez-Forte and Wilson (2021) “Assessing Smart Specialisation: The Entrepreneurial Discovery Process”

4. Empirical evidence: Implementation measures



JRC SCIENCE FOR POLICY REPORT

Assessing Smart Specialisation:

POLICY 
IMPLEMENTATION
MEASURES

Authors:
Ugo Fratesi
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Fabrizio Guzzo
2021

Joint
Research

EUR 50252 EN

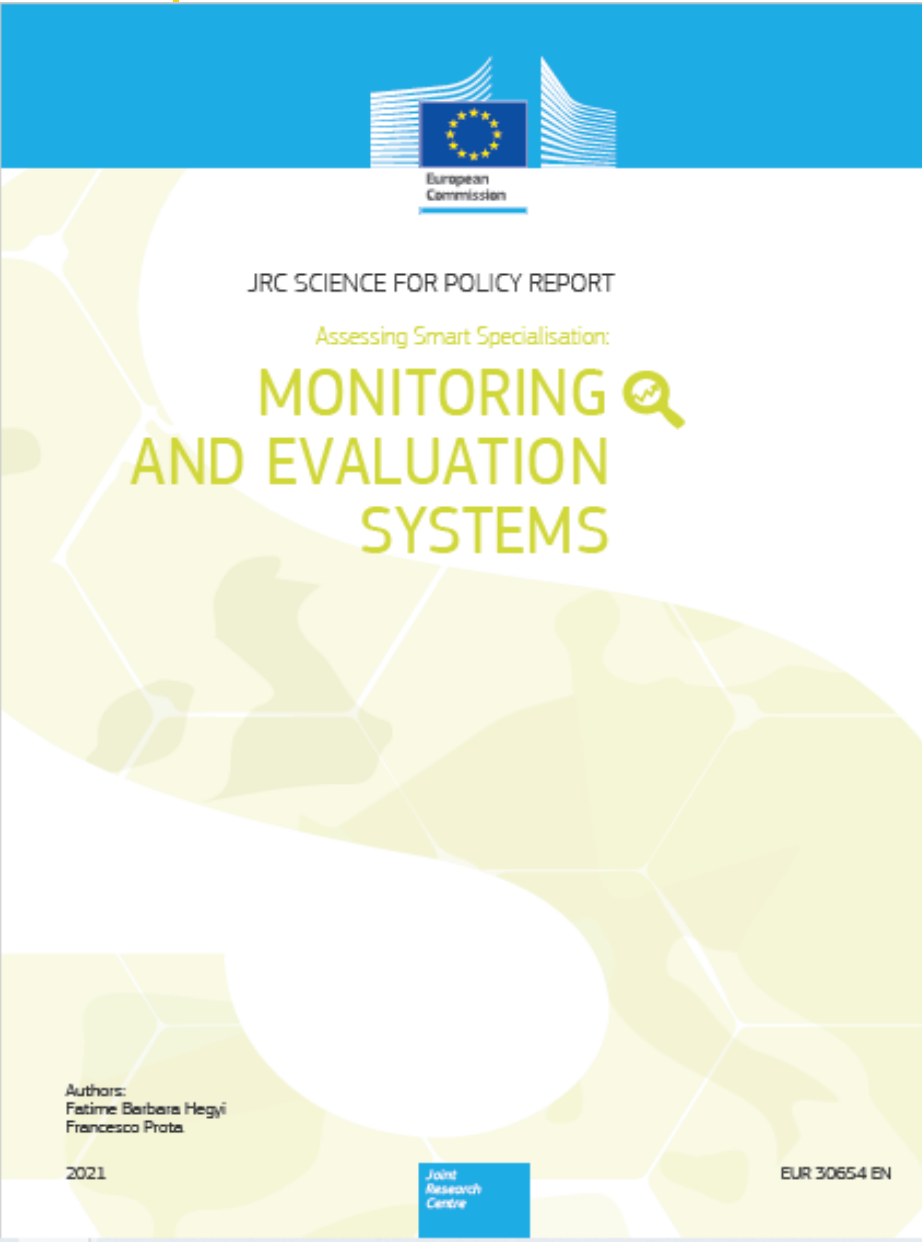
- **Little selectivity** in terms of both priorities and type of interventions
- **Instruments** deployed are mostly **traditional, supply-side**
- Limited support to **agglomeration dynamics**

Fratesi, Gianelle, and Guzzo (2021) "Assessing Smart Specialisation: Policy Implementation Measures"



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5. Empirical evidence: Monitoring and Evaluation



- Incomplete logic of intervention
→ **incomplete monitoring system**
- **Great heterogeneity:** Policy learning occurs mostly in more developed regions
- **Lack of feedback loops** from evaluators to policy makers

Hegyi and Prota (2021) “Assessing Smart Specialisation: Monitoring and Evaluation Systems”

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Evidence and Lessons Learned from Catalonia

Tatiana Fernández

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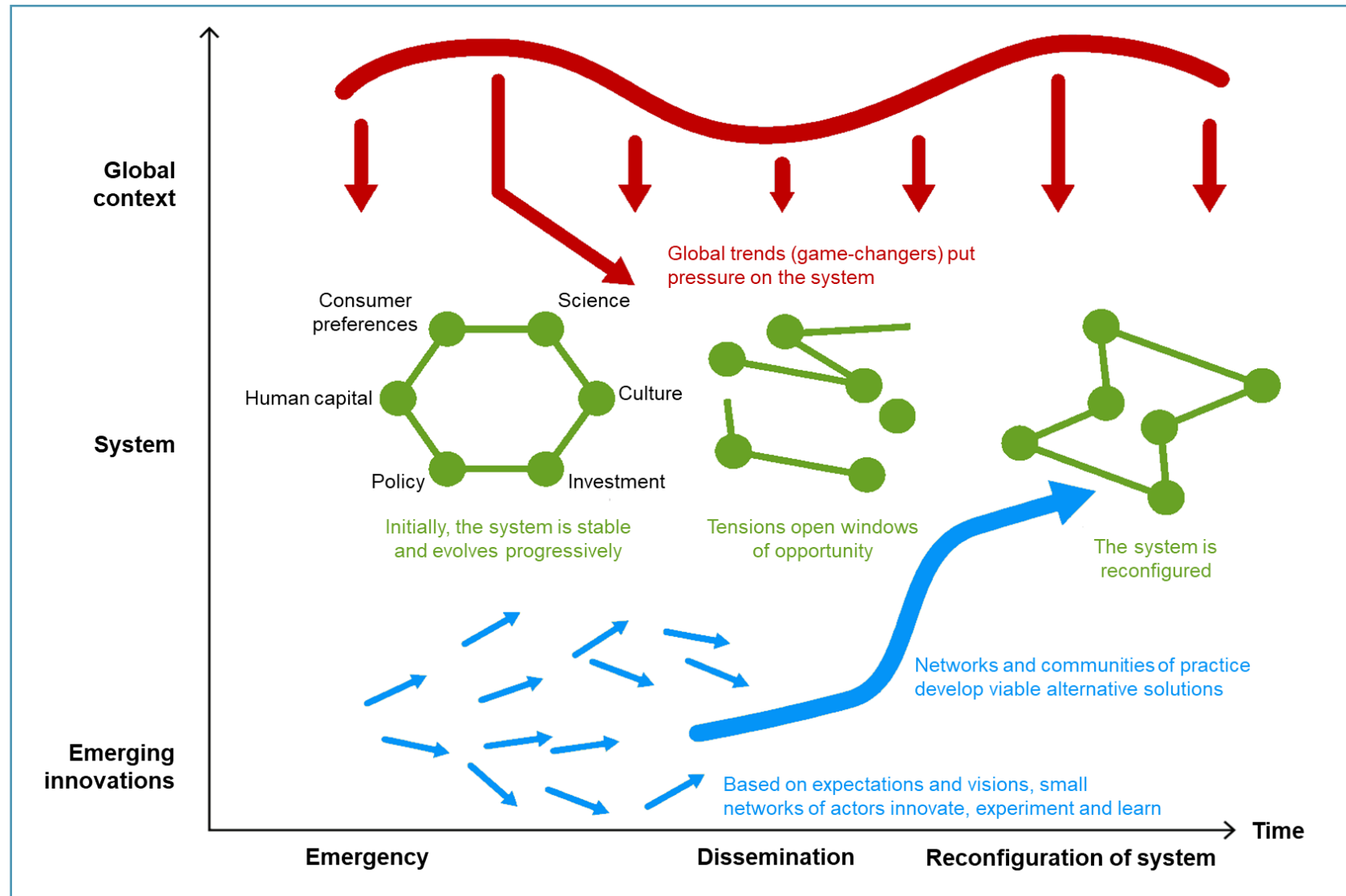
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Generalitat de Catalunya

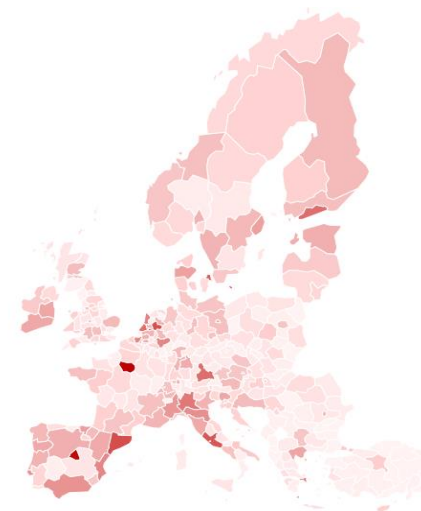
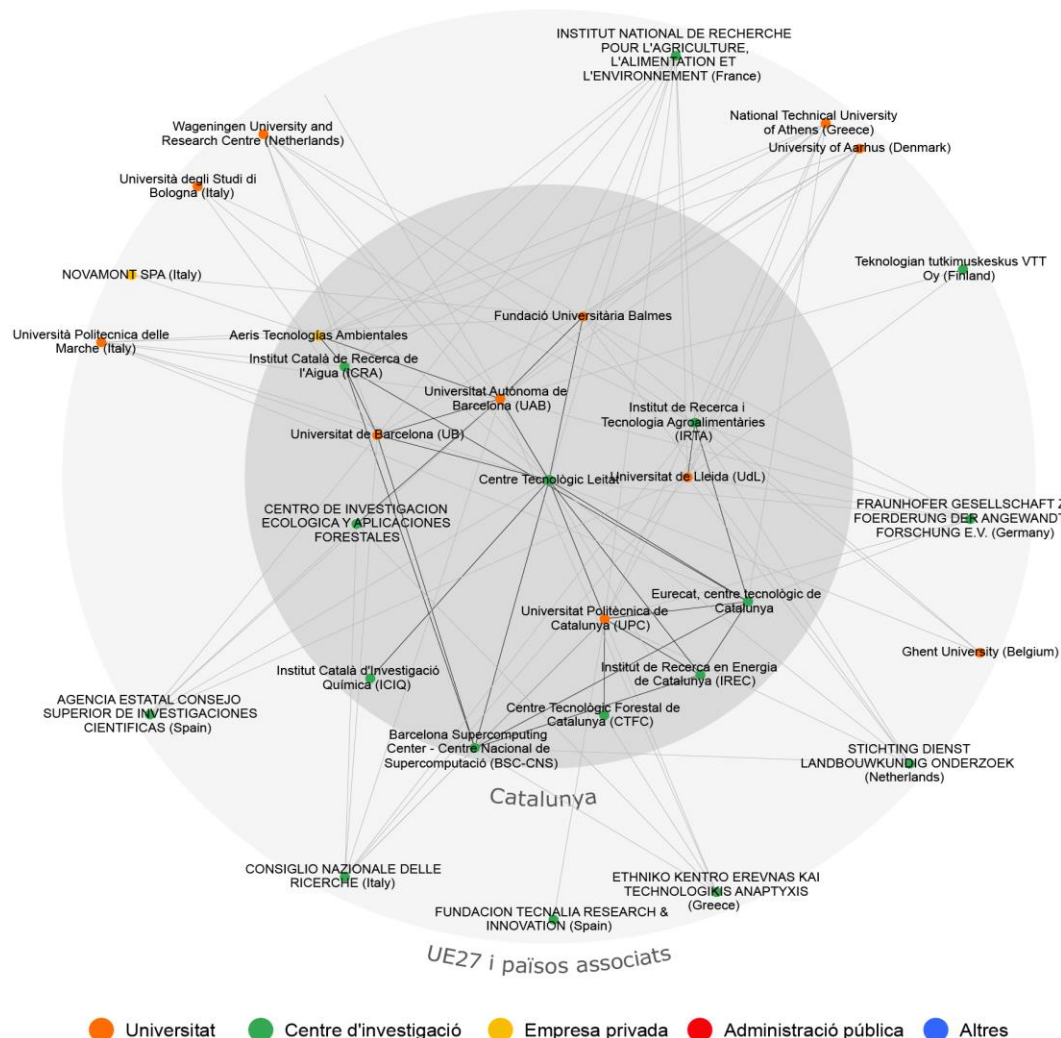
S4 requires systemic approaches



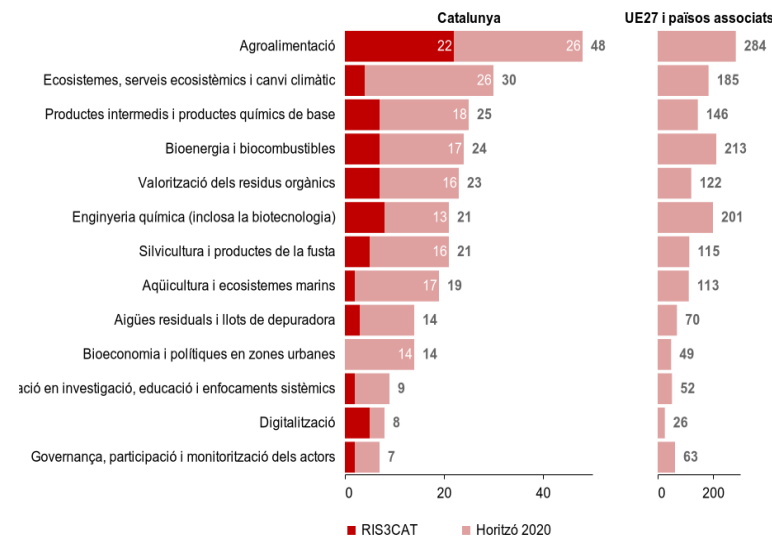
S4 and EDP are key to accelerate regional transitions towards the SDGs and the Green Deal: Through the alignment of multiple actors, funds and programs in transformative shared goals.

Exploring new approaches to monitor S4

Examples of the analysis of the circular bioeconomy in Catalonia



- Developing indicators based on open data (projects, publications...) and the use of AI tools.
- Delimitating emergent activities, technologies and challenges (beyond traditional taxonomies) to identify domains, compare specialisations and identify actors, leaderships and collaboration potentials.



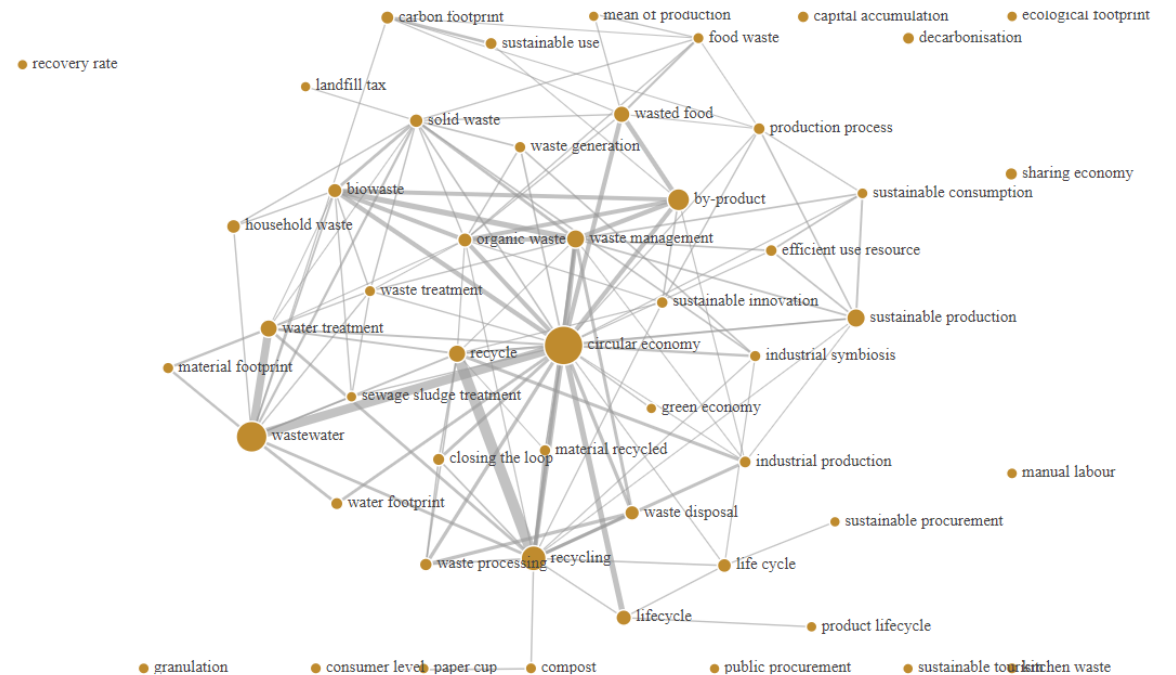
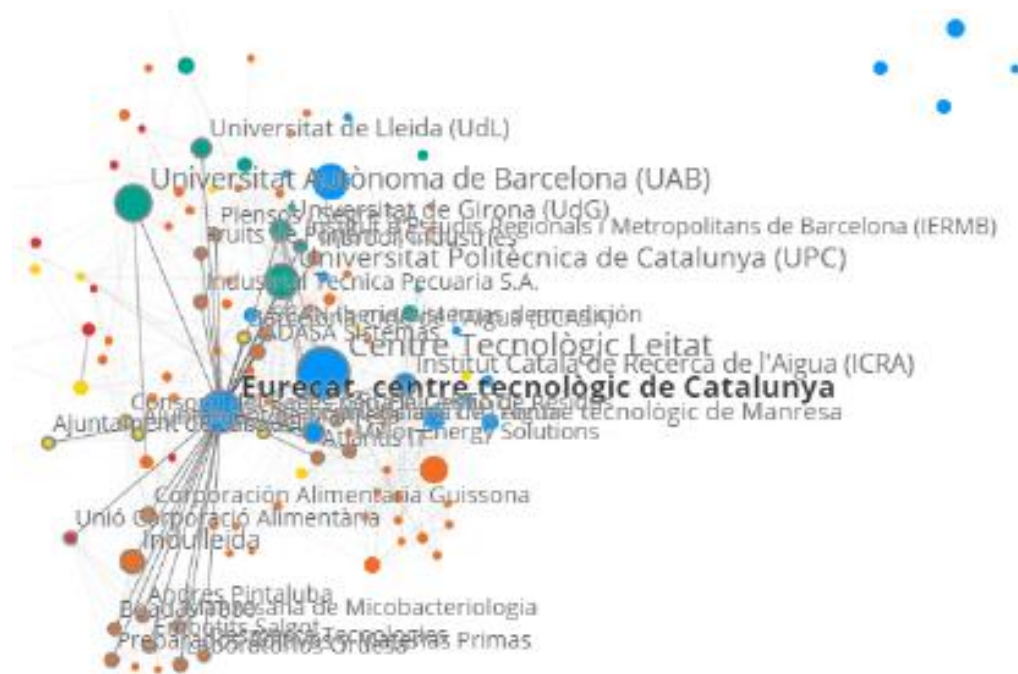
More information:

<http://ris3mcat.gencat.cat/>

[Anàlisi de l'especialització en bioeconomia circular](#)

Exploring how EU funds contribute to SDGs

Examples from SDG 12, responsible production and consumption



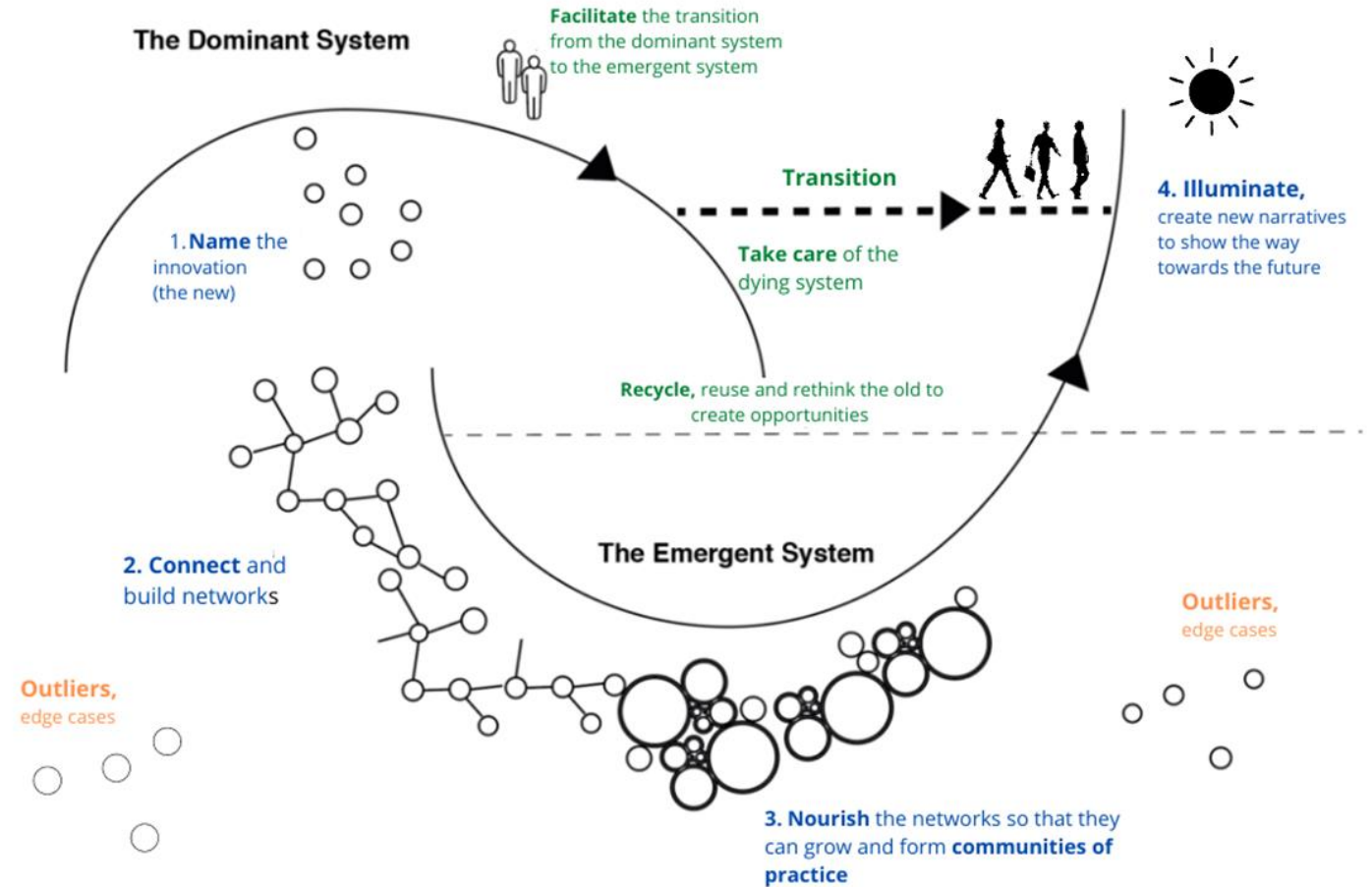
More information:

<http://ris3mcat.gencat.cat/>

[Specialisation and contribution to SDGs](#)

Lessons learned and challenges ahead

- S4 should have a systemic approach and a collective directionality.
- S4 should aim at the creation of “something different and better” (not at the optimization of what exists).
- EDP and new evidences and narratives are key to engage more stakeholders in the process of building a better future.



Source: adapted from Berkana's Institute 2 Loops Model

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Experiences on Smart
Specialisation 2014-2020

By Jerker Johnson

Coordinator International Affairs,
Regional Council of Ostrobothnia

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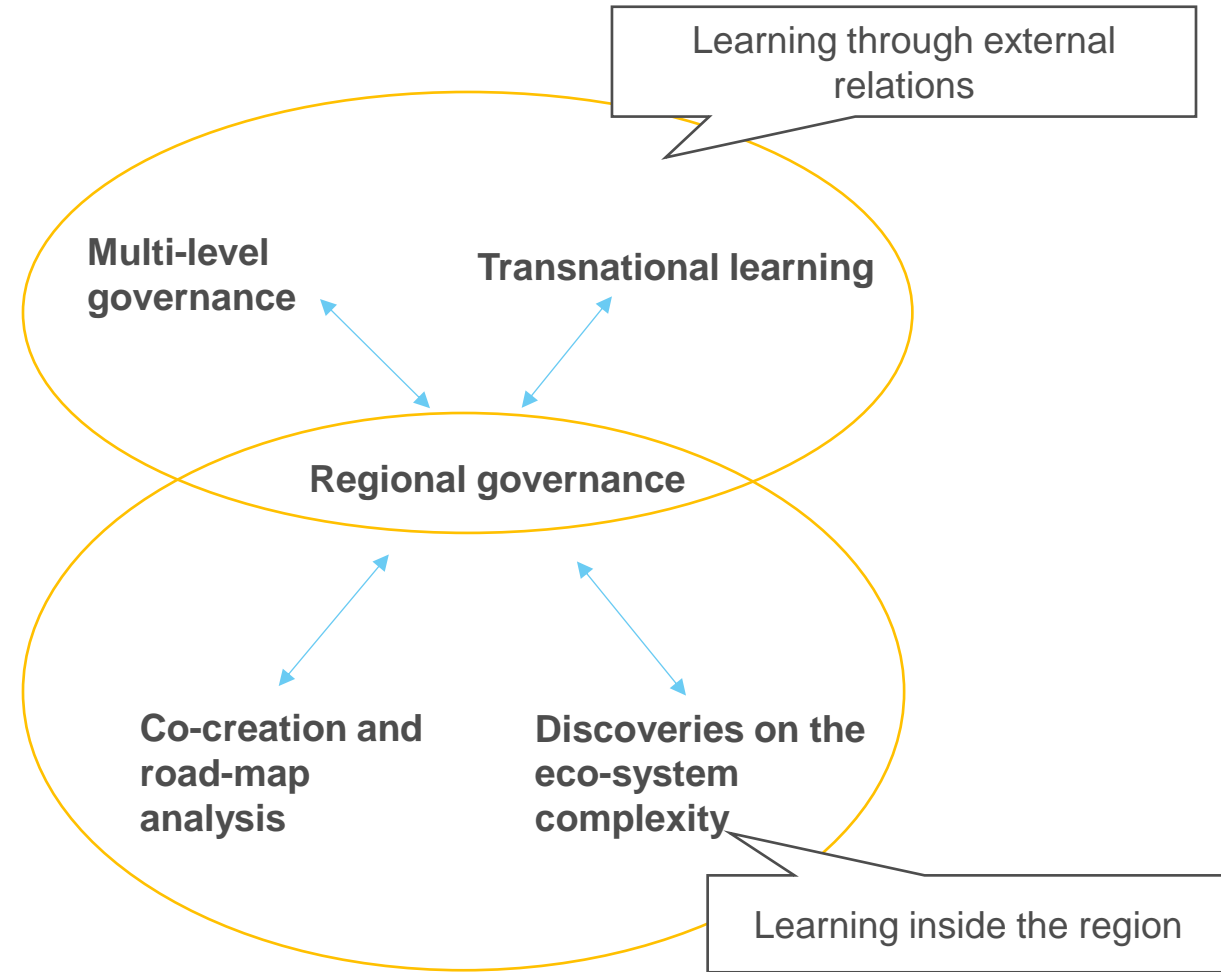


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Experiences on Regional Governance and Entrepreneurial Discoveries in 2014-2020

- Co-creation to mobilize stakeholders for partnership building and development of road-maps
- Discoveries of ecosystem complexity for understanding of the policy context
- Multi-level governance for aligning of policies with the national and European level
- Transnational learning to support the process through knowledge, development inspiration and “critical mass”
- Regional governance that learns, concludes and acts on conclusions



Learning inside the region

Key messages on co-creation

- Yes, it is possible and when well conducted it may influence managerial sense-making of new business opportunities and need to change the business model
- It however requires a continuous interactive and validated and recurrent methodology a fixed format and intermittent repetitions.
- Stakeholder analysis and understanding of motives are vital and will become pivotal when applying smart specialization for the Green Deal
- The process has put us in a better position to absorb the recovery funds, that now are being rapidly available, in future oriented projects

Key messages on discoveries on the innovation eco-system

- Leading MNE companies with SMEs in the value-chain. The digitalization implies challenges of global sourcing and adoption to new SME business models
- The Green Deal will increase the demand for RES-technologies, but it will also stiffer an already hard global competition
- We have observed that the companies have higher “expectations” on both universities and the public sector compared to five years ago, we need to match that with also a higher “experience”

Learning through external relations

Key messages on multi-level governance

- In Finland we have a centrally-led “dirigiste” innovation system governance even if there has been some movement in the thinking. In practice there is sufficient flexibility in the strategies to adopt to regional needs. However, this makes it difficult to conclude on policies on a system level.
- Tapping into regional heterogeneity is a source of innovation but it requires a granularity and understanding of the challenges that cannot be coordinated from top-down.

Key messages on transnational learning

- Regional innovation system have different drivers and innovation modes, tapping into this is a source of transnational learning
- Transnational learning is likely to be the most “low-hanging fruits” for innovations particularly among innovation followers
- We are likely to face some “institutional exhaustion” in the process and transnational learning may function as “critical mass

Regional Governance acting on discoveries

Key messages on Regional Governance

- Smart specialization needs proactive governance. The capacity problem in this process is likely to form a smaller problem than motivational and inspirational issues. The tradition and incentives working in regional administration is not in engaging in a discovery process but in administering and distributing funds.
- Political processes mobilize on opportunities and/or threats. Already well-off regions are likely to truly engage in the process, peripheral regions are more likely to suffer from “institutional exhaustion”.
- The public authorities should focus on making the innovation system work and unlock the innovation system potential instead of moving too fast into economic interventions.



Thank you for your attention! 😊

...so let's have a debate!