

SMARTER 2020 Conference

Connecting grand societal
challenges with local goals
in place-based innovation policy

Webinar 02:

Smart Specialisation Strategies
for Sustainability – opportunities for
economic recovery and competitiveness

6 October 2020

⌚ CEST

09:30 - 11:30

#SmartSpecialisation

RSA Europe



European
Commission

Multi-level Policy coherence : A small country perspective

Jennifer Cassingena Harper

Multi-level Policy Design

- Key tensions between EU Green Deal and the smart specialisation approach
 - Directionality vs entrepreneurial discovery (top-down vs bottom-up partnership)
 - Political imperative (e.g. targets, capacity needs) vs RIS (strengths, competitive advantage and potential for excellence) approach
 - Sectoral vs place-based approaches; Mission vs diffusion-oriented policies
- Complementarities (as bridges) Both approaches are:
 - Transition/modernisation processes to drive knowledge-based innovation, growth and jobs.
 - Forward-looking, anticipatory, participatory and inclusive
 - Evidence-based and depend on sound monitoring and evaluation systems

Multi-level Policy design needs to resolve tensions and build on complementarities as bridges to connect local, regional, national, EU.

Multi-level Policy design :

Two distinct strategies one at national and one at regional level (RIS) but ensuring complementarity between the two

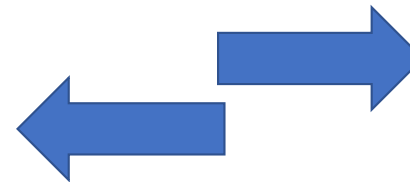
Exploring the potential of using smart specialisation niches as levers for green and digital transitions

Mechansisms for addressing tensions and trade-offs

RIS 2020
Niche Areas



Mutual
Reinforcement



National R&I
Strategic
Plan



Smaller country multi-level strategies for green and digital transition

- From a small country perspective, the COVID pandemic exposes **the vulnerability of small size and peripheral location**; risk of future exposure to external hazards; knock-on effects on financial, political, economic, social and security systems.
- New R&I policy design – strong emphasis on **resilience**. Robust policy approaches: anticipation, multi-level coherence, joined up policies
- Achieved via **bridging mechanisms** between the more bottom-up RIS strategy based on entrepreneurial discovery process to the more top-down challenges and missions which draw on EU and national priorities, including the EU Green Deal, SDGs.
 - RIS niche areas as levers for green digital transitions
 - Investments in localities and communities to pilot new inclusive green initiatives (citizen, community and entrepreneurial engagement, addressing pending threats and opportunities and managing trade-offs)

Supporting Multilevel Governance

- Small countries conflate multilevel governance (overlap of national and regional)
 - Key linkages often need to come from outside
- Leverage role of EU to support R&I in small countries and regions
- Networks and partnerships of regions and small countries working on similar green transition pilots (synergies with European Universities initiative)
- Mutual learning through comparative approaches (trade-offs, early warning of negative effects and niche opportunities)
- Dual learning approach:
 - national and the regional plans could have an intrinsic learning system
 - an external and objective learning system, in particular for capturing local trade-offs and early warning signals and transmit them to the EU and national level.
- JRC could play a constructive role, with science-based feed-back to all levels in the multi-level governance and in supporting the co-design of a new RIS4 approach.