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Policy capacity for Smart Specialisation Strategies: setting the scene

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European Commission

Presentation outline

- Problems and challenges: the policy makers' view

- A conceptual framework from analysing policy capacity

JRC TECHNICAL REPORTS

Smart Specialisation at work: the policy makers' view on strategy design and implementation

S3 Working Paper Series No. 15/2018

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2018

https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/jrc114141.pdf
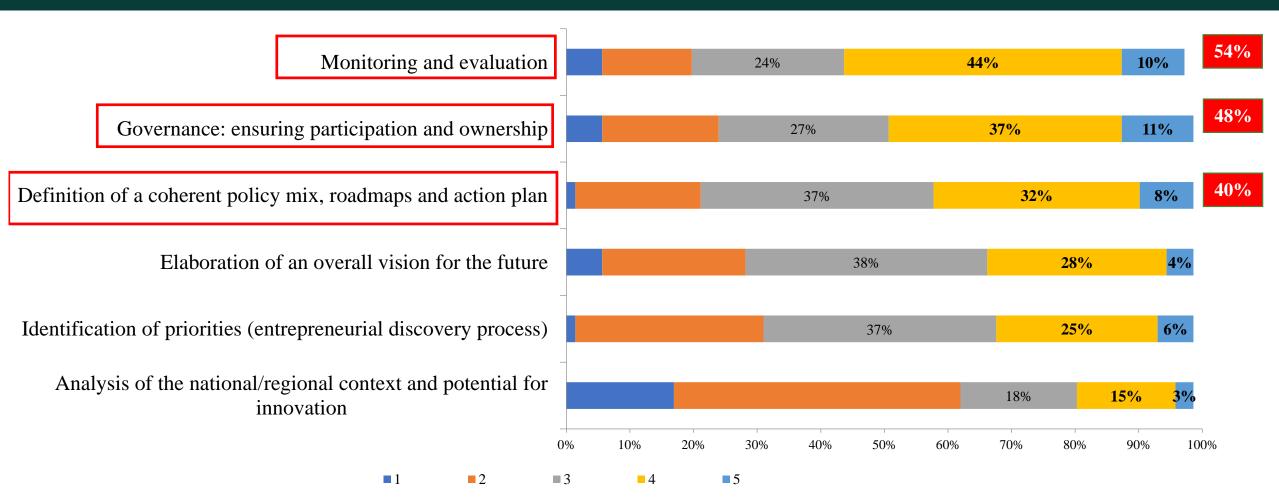
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Policy capacity: the policy makers' view (JRC survey, 2018)

RIS3 is a **demanding policy** in terms of **policy intelligence**, **skills** and **capabilities** for public authorities and stakeholders

*(**9 out of 10** respondents agree or strongly agree)*

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The most challenging aspects of the RIS3 design process

Level of difficulty encountered with respect to the six steps of the S3 design process (5. very difficult - 1. very easy)
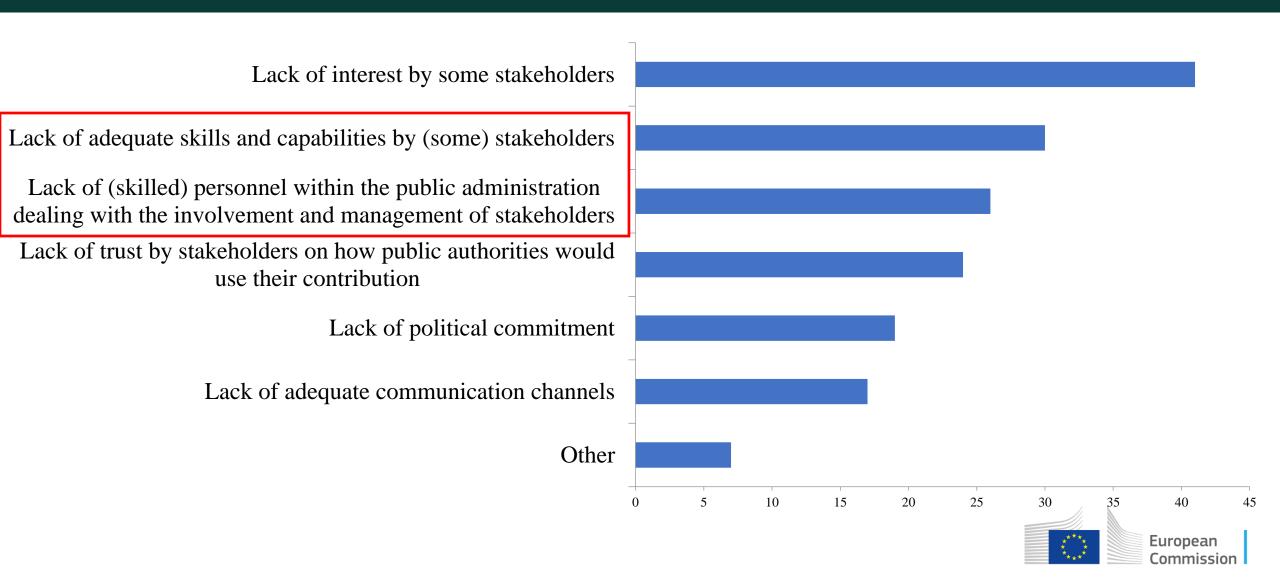
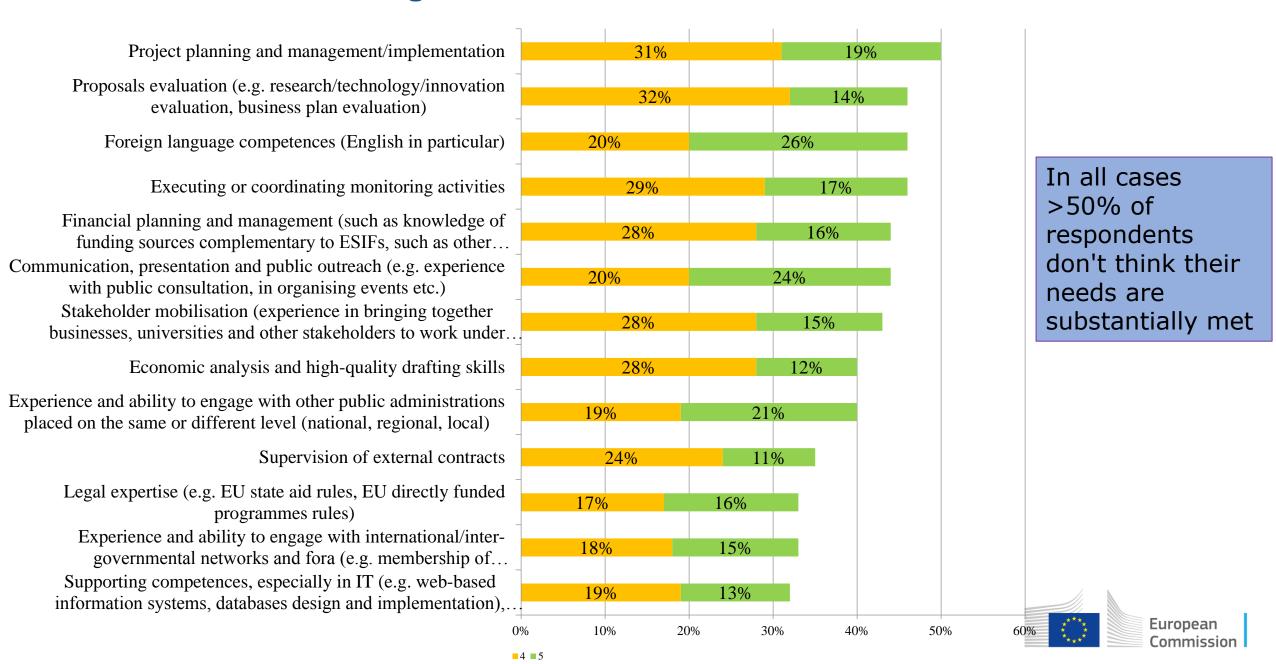# Main challenges/problems with respect to the RIS3 exercise

Activity	Problems/challenges
Analysis of the context and potential for innovation	1. Lack of data and/or data availability when needed
	2. Lack of evaluation studies and monitoring information on past policies
	3. Difficulties in getting civil society groups involved
	4. Lack of skills and capabilities in some groups of stakeholders
Priority selection	1. Difficulties in getting enterprises involved
	2. Lack of skills and capabilities in some groups of stakeholders
	3. Difficulties in getting civil society groups involved
Policy-mix and policy instruments	1. Obstacles associated with the different rules governing diverse funding sources
	2. Synergies among policies and funding managed by different organisations placed on different territorial levels (EU, national, regional)
	3. Difficulties in managing/financing interregional collaborative projects
	4. Lack of skills and capabilities within the (regional/national) administration
Monitoring activities	1. Lack of data and/or data availability when needed
	2. Lack of evaluation studies and monitoring information on past policies
	3. Lack of skills and capabilities within the (regional/national) administration

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Stakeholder engagement: main obstacles

Skill needs in RIS3 management teams (replies *"needs substantially met"* and *"needs fully met"*)

Skill	4	5
Project planning and management/implementation	31%	19%
Proposals evaluation (e.g. research/technology/innovation evaluation, business plan evaluation)	32%	14%
Foreign language competences (English in particular)	20%	26%
Executing or coordinating monitoring activities	29%	17%
Financial planning and management (such as knowledge of funding sources complementary to ESIFs, such as other…	28%	16%
Communication, presentation and public outreach (e.g. experience with public consultation, in organising events etc.)	20%	24%
Stakeholder mobilisation (experience in bringing together businesses, universities and other stakeholders to work under…	28%	15%
Economic analysis and high-quality drafting skills	28%	12%
Experience and ability to engage with other public administrations placed on the same or different level (national, regional, local)	19%	21%
Supervision of external contracts	24%	11%
Legal expertise (e.g. EU state aid rules, EU directly funded programmes rules)	17%	16%
Experience and ability to engage with international/inter-governmental networks and fora (e.g. membership of…	18%	15%
Supporting competences, especially in IT (e.g. web-based information systems, databases design and implementation),…	19%	13%

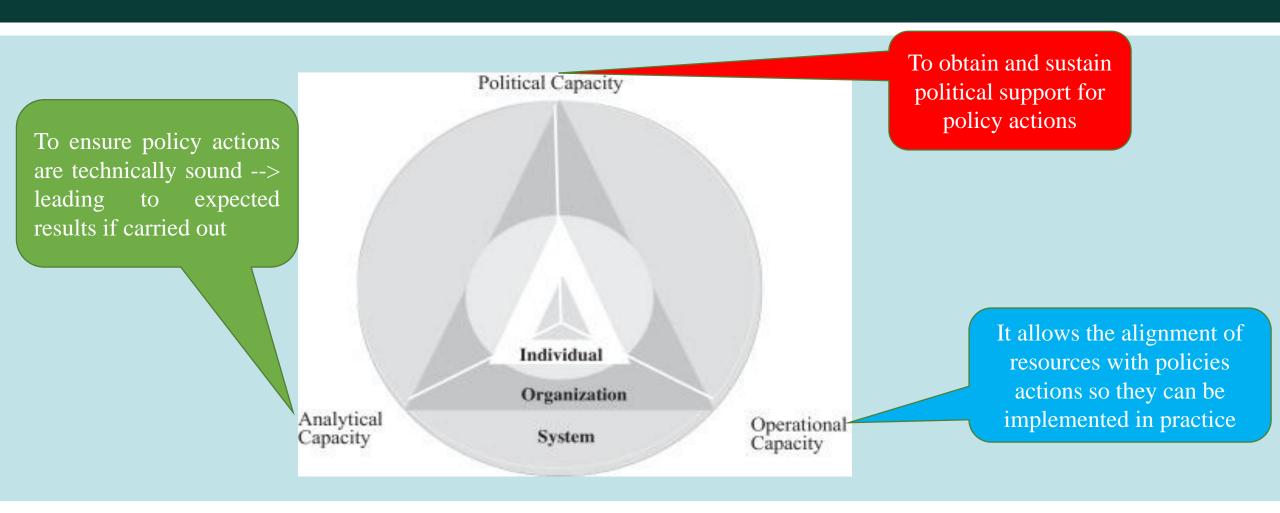In all cases >50% of respondents don't think their needs are substantially met

Policy capacity: a definition

*"…. the set of **skills and resources necessary to perform policy functions**"* (Wu *et al.* 2015)

- It covers all policy processes (design, implementation and evaluation)
- It regards all the actors involved in policy processes (not only the government)

A *nested* model of *policy capacity* (Wu *et al.* 2015)

Operational capacity

Individual: strategic and financial management; coordination and negotiation skills; capacity for decision making process; interpersonal networking.

Organisational: human and financial resources management system, existence of internal and external coordination mechanisms, consultation and communication.

Systemic: rules and arrangements ensuring autonomy and accountability in a MLG environment, etc.

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Political capacity

Individual: Understanding of relevant stakeholders' needs and interests; reading of the political environment

Organisational: Attribution of responsibilities and political support; existence of inter-organisational trust

Systemic: adequate financial resources to fund public intervention; circulation and access to information; etc.

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What can we do about it?

Recommendations

Experiences

Lessons

Any questions?

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