



Lessons from the 2014-2020 S3 Interregional Cooperation

Smart Specialisation for Sustainable

Blue Economy Workshop

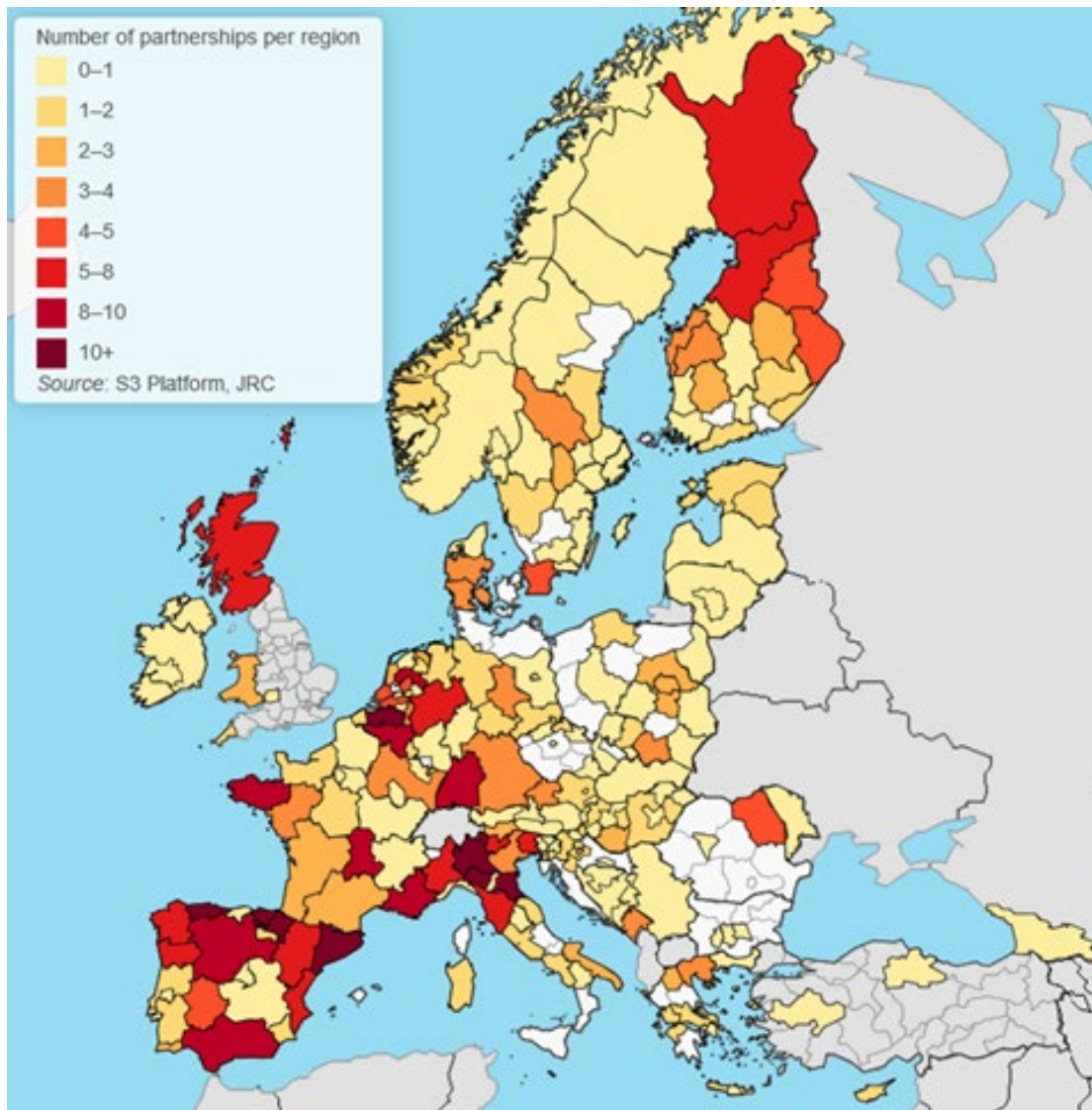
06 July 2021

*Karel Haegeman (B7), Isabelle Seigneur
(B5), Fernando Mérida (B7)*

Joint Research Centre

Karel-herman.haegeman@ec.europa.eu

Geographical spread



Thematic Platforms and their 37 interregional smart specialisation partnerships have created a **pan-European network of networks**

Taking full advantage of EU's territorial diversity (economies of scope) would require optimising involvement from less advanced territories.

Benefits

- Identifying and matching complementarities/synergies
- Deep analysis of internal capacities
- Addressing gaps and weaknesses across the EU innovation investment landscape
- Market-oriented approach
- Paving the way for potential strategic alignment which will go beyond the development of specific projects

Challenges

Inadequate frameworks	Uneven domestic innovation investing environments
	Complex bureaucracy
	Fragmented or inefficient synergies of available funding (EU, national, regional, public/private)
	Interregional funding gap
	Lack of incentives to involve the private sector
Inefficient governance and leadership	Insufficient strong and continuous commitment and leadership
	Focus on joint innovation investments rather than on strategic synergies
	Sustainability of effort / Partnerships' fatigue
Lack of competences & capacities	Lack of relevant competences on financial, managerial, technical & legal issues
	Lack of transversal skills
	Underestimation of interregional cooperation complexity and timeframe

Self-assessment toolbox



- to help S3 partnerships to measure:
 - ✓ their own **level of maturity** of their collaborative activities,
 - ✓ their **effectiveness** in putting forward joint investment proposals.
- to assess strategic & operational progress of:
 - ✓ the **interregional** activities of the partnership as a whole,
 - ✓ the effects on **intraregional dynamics**.
- Can serve as a guidance (checklist) for the effective development of both the partnership itself and its innovative ideas, and to pave the way for long-term solutions to improve their effectiveness.



SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOLBOX
for interregional thematic S3 partnerships

June 2021



Self-assessment toolbox - Structure

INDICATOR	GUIDANCE NOTES	ASSESSMENT	ACTION If the indicator is not fulfilled, describe the reasons why and the action to be taken To improve the effectiveness of the partnership
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes, but not effective • Yes, but partially effective • Yes, effective 	

- SECTION A: Management, communication and dissemination
- SECTION B: Maturity of the cooperation
- SECTION C: Maturity of the Business and Investment Case/ Investment readiness

C1: General outcomes

C2: Outcomes related to the development of **interregional innovative ideas**

= collaborative initiatives related to the development of new products, solutions or services, e.g. joint investment demo projects, share of research facilities, mutual learning activities, etc.

A key role for place-based innovation

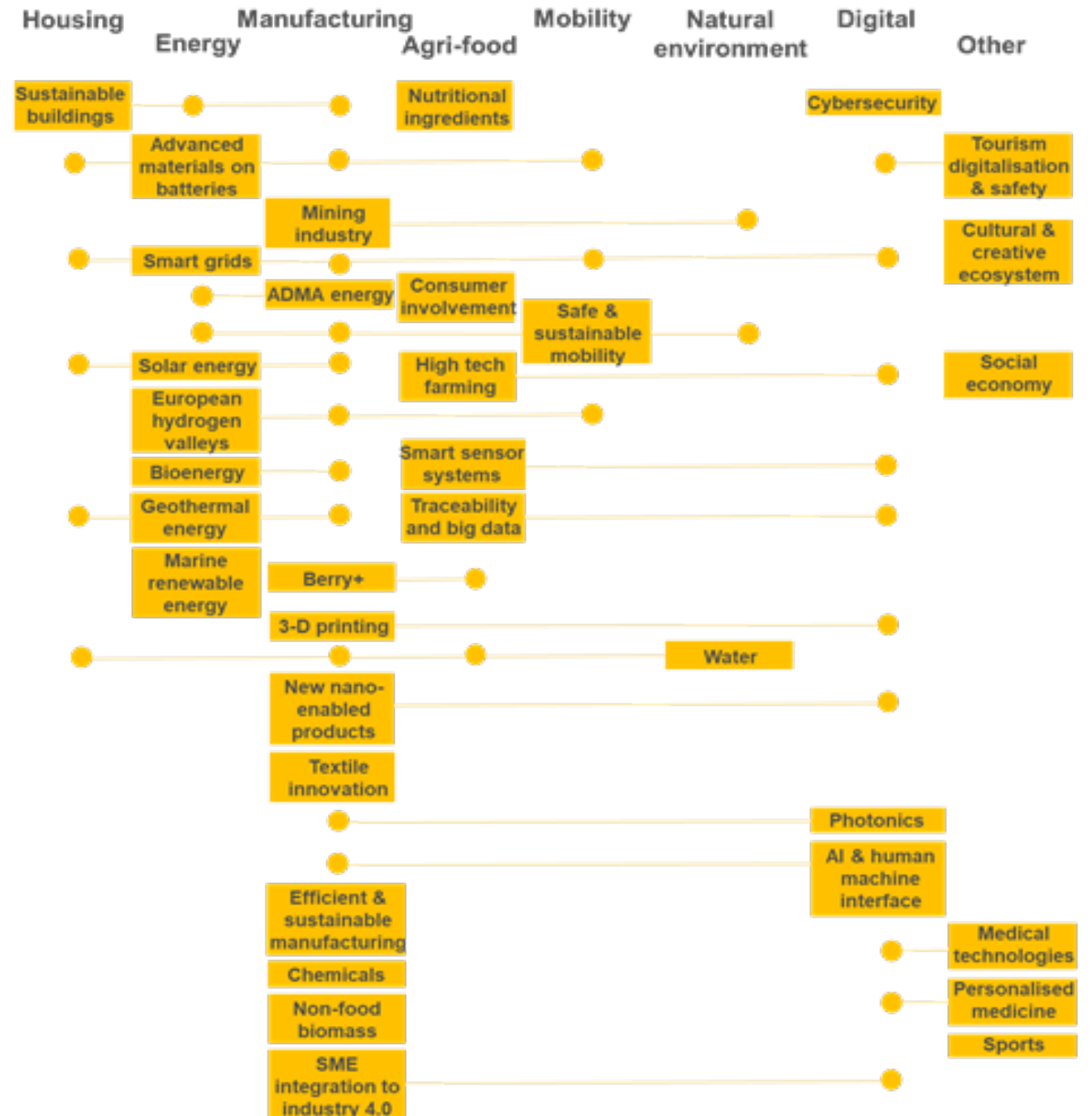
- Connecting better places, their actors, investments and innovative solutions to new and renewed value chains and to other places around the EU can allow for cross-fertilisation, faster learning and better connections to global markets.
- Interregional thematic smart specialisation partnerships are in a good position to foster such connections and for integrating place-based innovation in the European recovery agenda.

(See also McCann & Soete, 2020)

Interregional S3 partnerships and the twin transition

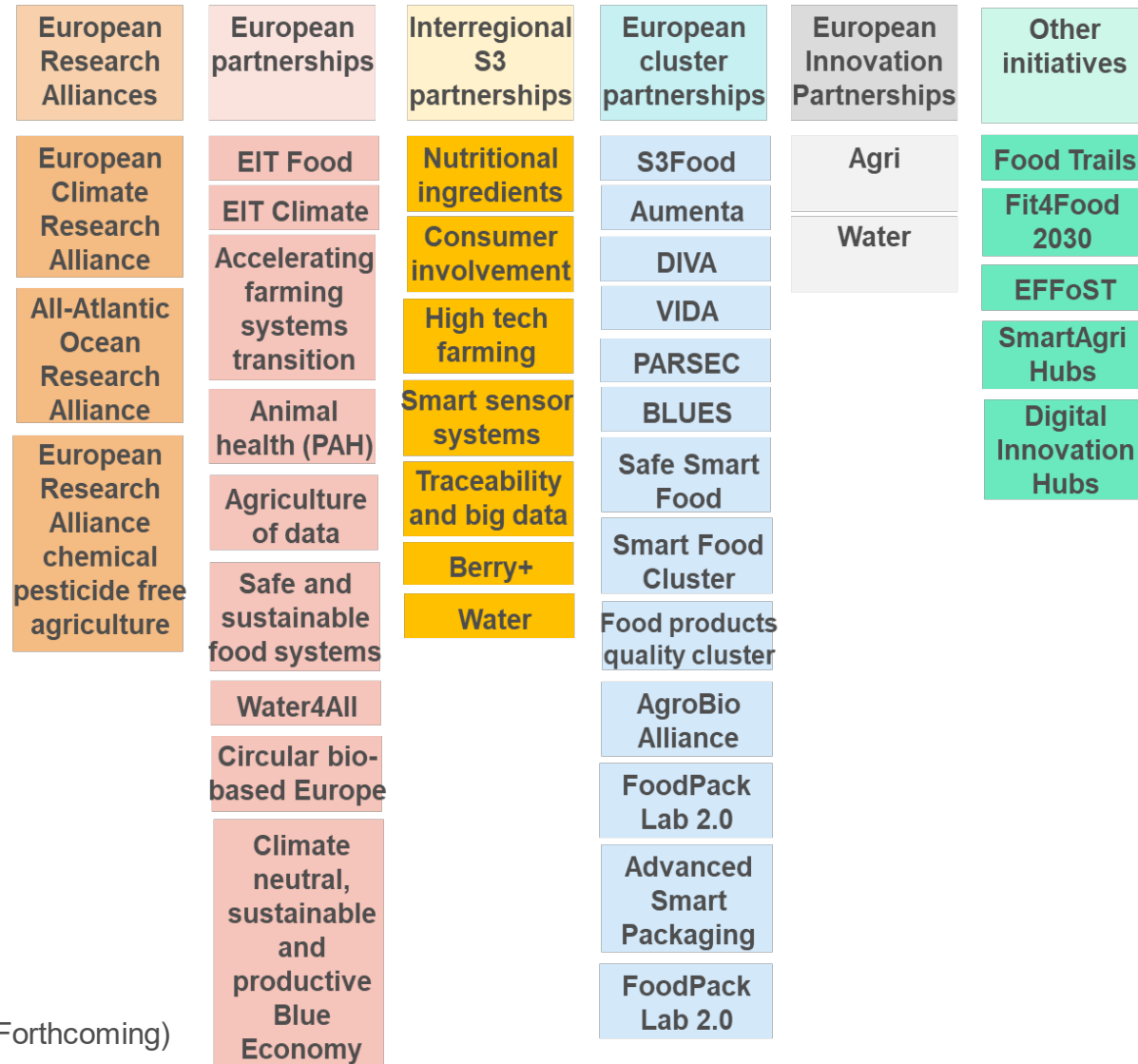
Many **topics** of the interregional S3 partnerships are at the core of the systems that are key for making the twin transition a reality.

The figure also reflects possible collaborations between partnerships within each of the systems.



Multi-level governance for a green and digital Europe

Agri-food system



Leaving no place behind

Issues hampering coordination of thematic innovation policies in EU13	Preferred ways forward
Lack of leadership, institutional capacity, inefficient governance	Preference for self-governance over creating new entities
Unattractive conditions for civil servants (low wages, low self-esteem, inadequate training, scarce promotions)	Interest in more appealing and steady careers with quantitative (salaries) and qualitative (e.g. teleworking, internship opportunities, trainings, etc.) incentives
Lack of transversal skills: communication, project management, analysis, understanding EU policies,...	Strong interest in guidance/support from the EC (technical assistance, peer review, JRC support) and knowledge transfer from EU14
Lack of internationalisation (disinterest from government, R&I communities preferring the comfort zone of national/regional funding sources)	Interest in long-standing policy actions, beyond the lifetime of a single political cycle. Better use of ESIF to remove barriers to internationalisation

Background

McCann, P. & Soete, L. (2020) [Place-based innovation for sustainability](#)

Nauwelaers, C., Seigneur, I. & Gómez, J. (2018) [Good Practices for Smart Specialisation in Energy](#)

Özbolat, N., Haegeman, K. & Sereti, K. (2019) [EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities: Collaboration in a RIS3 context](#)

Haegeman, K., Arregui Pabollet, E., Harrap, N., Horbaczewska, K., Torrecillas Caro, M. and Valero Boned, S. (2019) [Joint Undertakings: analysis of collaboration mechanisms with ESI Funds in an S3 context](#)

Thank you