“[E]very journey is played out between standstill and flight.”

Claudio Magris,
Danube: A sentimental Journey from the Source to the Black Sea

Towards a new place-based approach & a smartly specialised, innovative Danube Region

Armin Mahr, Budapest, June 2013
Content

- Smart specialisation & the Danube Region
- Renaissance of place-based policy
- RIS3: What is in for politics? What is in for you?
- RIS3: Opportunities for place-based policy interventions
- EUSDR: A region defined by the need for smart, sustainable and inclusive change
- EUSDR: First steps underway
Useful documents

The European Commission’s **S3 platform** at the Joint Research Centre, Sevilla, Spain:

http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu

Download your **RIS3 KEY** from the Austrian ERA portal:

www.era.gv.at

and get started with Smart Specialisation.

**Coming soon**…

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Smart specialisation & the Danube Region

In my view ...

Smart specialisation is a predominantly political concept, offering a timely policy frame to mobilise regions and places towards knowledge- and innovation-driven structural change.

- EU concept with Danubian dimension and international recognition
- Concept needs due time for absorption, particularly in a Danubian and neighbourhood context.
Renaissance of place-based policy

► Prioritisation of public investments in R&D and innovation is more intense at regional than at national level (OECD 2013).

► National or regional RIS3? The focus should always be place-driven, holistic, and creating synergies between policies.

► Beyond traditional market failure arguments, highlighting role of 1) regional governments, 2) knowledge-based institutions and 3) entrepreneurs in shaping specialisation and competitiveness in a holistic, place-based approach.

► Horizontal aspect: Creating synergies with other policy areas is key (eg New Industrial Policy agenda).

► Vertical involvement of all levels of government

► Governance spillover: Compulsory involvement of stakeholders / experts / entrepreneurs

► Challenges are global. Still: Proximity counts worldwide

► Politics in search of new logics for policy interventions (multi-level governance, a globalised environment still needs places and spaces of reference)
The RIS3 KEY Triple-Helix Model of Smart Specialisation
What is in for politics? What is in for you? (1)

- As a policy-driven concept, policy-makers should see smart specialisation as a communication instrument with stakeholders of a process for structural change. The mobilising and empowering elements are key.
- Regions cannot be frontrunners in every industry/STI field: evidence-base and originality count / limited resources need to find the right investment place: more effective allocation of resources, reduction of fragmentation/duplication
- Smart specialisation is a policy process where tough choices become more transparent: Choices are risky but: joint policy risk-sharing
- Creation of synergies between public support mechanisms for R&D and innovation, industrial promotion and human capital and training in order to leverage private investments, boosting business opportunities and attracting foreign investment: joint financial risk-sharing
What is in for politics? What is in for you? (2)

- Smart specialisation is not about any specialisation in a set of industries or STI fields, it considers where existing strengths in one sector suggest potential in the other: industry and academia need to become empowered policy entrepreneurs.

- Smart specialisation is not about innovations everywhere or lottery bets; no golden way. Innovation is multi-dimensional, for every place there are several games: an educated guess is based on a history, monitoring and evaluation.

- Smart Specialisations are not made for eternity: It is part of the strategy process to assess whether at any time my system is able to generate, discover, detect and realise opportunities in a global value-chain context. Are politics/industry/academia fit to specialise? Is it the right time for that specialisation? Time matters.
RIS3 opportunities
for place-based interventions
(entrepreneurial discovery / open governance)

► Green Growth: only sustainable is smart – Eco-innovation & Energy efficiency
► Digital agenda: enabling knowledge flows within and across regions – connected regions
► Clusters for regional growth: business ecologies that drive innovation
► Innovation-friendly business environments for SMEs: good jobs in internationally competitive firms
► Social innovation: new organisational forms to tackle societal challenges
► Stronger focus on financial engineering: new funding models, not only grants
► Lifelong Learning in research and innovation: support knowledge triangle (edu/research/inno) and university-enterprise cooperation
► Key Enabling Technologies: systemic potential to induce structural change
► Research infrastructure/centres of competence: support to wide diffusion of leading edge R&D results
► Creativity and cultural industries: innovation beyond technology and outside manufacturing
► Public procurement for market pull: pre-competitive PP to open new innovation friendly market niches
EUSDR: A region defined by the need for smart, sustainable and inclusive change

- Economic crisis, stagnation in innovation performance, increasing growth disparities, East-West divide in the Danube Region

- Bringing the EU 2020 strategy into all parts of the region: Investments in the knowledge triangle are key.

- Consider all three growth dimensions when investing in one! Smart growth investments need sustainability and inclusiveness
  - Investment in people and careers
  - Investment in the higher education system and business2academia colab
  - Removal of mobility obstacles
  - Investment into employment conditions
  - Cross-border funding, simple and coherent rules
  - Scientific evidence base of policy-making
A Danubian strategic frame around regional specialisations needs to balance the regions’ scores along all three growth dimensions:

- Smart growth
- Sustainable growth
- Inclusive growth
EUSDR: First steps underway

- Priority Area 7 focus on Danube Region Research and Innovation Fund DRRIF
- Connecting activities with EU instruments (Danube INCO-Net etc)
- EU Structural and Investment Funds: programme region of the European Territorial Cooperation
- DREAM (Danube River Research And Management) as model flagship project
- JRC initiative: scientific support to EUSDR and for Danubian RIS3 spill-overs
A river, connecting regions...
...like a chain of smart pearls...
...towards a smartly specialised & innovative Danube Region...
Köszönöm szépen.
Thank you for your interest.

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