

RIS3 in Wielkopolska

The self-government of the Wielkopolska Region implements activities inscribing itself into the broadly defined innovation policy of the region. The basic strategic document approved by the Self-government of the Wielkopolska Region in this area is "Regional Innovation Strategy for Wielkopolska for the years 2015-2020 "(RIS3). Self-government's mission in the field of innovation policy is based on five principles: a policy based on facts, precise support, consistency in action, authenticity and originality as well as partnership. In turn, strategic goals of innovation policy focus around increase in demand for innovation in public sector, raising innovation and competitiveness of enterprises, adaptation of business environment institutions services to needs of enterprises, improving innovative competences in the cycle of education and lifelong learning, stimulating innovation by local self-governments and computerization of enterprises and public sector entities. RIS3 is based on the assumption that competitive advantage of the region is possible thanks to creation or improvement of modern solutions. That is why, innovations and the system of their direct support remain such an important element of building a competitive advantage of the region.

Having regard to the above, Wielkopolska systemically approaches all interactions that are held for the development of innovation in social, economic and scientific environment. The process of updating the Regional Innovation Strategy which had started in 2012, defined the areas and priorities of innovation policy intervention in Wielkopolska until 2020 and was a breakthrough in this context.

How smart specializations were identified?

Identification of areas of smart specialization in Wielkopolska was based on two sequences: scientific studies covering the selection of economic and scientific specializations in the region and the entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP), which aimed at using knowledge of entrepreneurs to set priorities and appropriate allocation of resources to accelerate development of the regions. As a part of the identification of the areas with competitive advantage of the region, the results of the studies were compared with economic reality, which allowed to precise areas of specialization. In 2013, the Marshal Office of the Wielkopolska Province carried out a series of three complementary tests:

- Research on dominating industries in the region's economy, the result of which was the identification of areas of economic specialization of the region based on statistical analyses regarding employment concentration, number of business entities, gross value added on the level of PKD sections and their changes;
- Research on the innovative needs of enterprises that was carried out on a sample of 3,500 Wielkopolska's companies. The scope of the research concerned management issues and organizational structure, level of innovation, including cooperation with science and business environment institutions and the course of innovative processes in enterprises;
- The study of the scientific specialization of the region that included bibliometric research, analysis of patent specialization areas, areas of cooperation between science economy, international cooperation of universities, as well as directions of students' education.

The results of the conducted research were the basis for identification of initial areas of smart specialization in the region and the launch of the entrepreneurial discovery process within these areas, consequently for the emerging of smart specialization areas in

Wielkopolska. These areas, included in RIS3, approved by local authorities in March 2015, have been divided into three groups:

I. Areas emerging from traditional economic specializations of Wielkopolska and having potential for modernization thanks to the contact with the region's scientific specialization:

1. Bio-based raw materials and food for informed consumers;
2. Interiors of the future;
3. The industry of tomorrow;
4. Specialized logistics processes;
5. ICT-based development.

II. Quality of life - Areas emerging from challenges in Wielkopolska, including modern technologies, services and products friendly to man and improving quality of life, based on emergent sectors and emerging scientific potential:

1. Modern medical technologies.

III. Areas of inter-branch innovations - many innovations, as well as new industries and economic sectors forms at the interface of existing areas of specialization. Investments in the areas of intersection of industries can lead to significant innovations, create synergies and bring the greatest benefits for the development of the region's economy.

RIS3 was also approved in July last year by the European Commission and thus the Wielkopolska Province was the first region in Poland to fill "Ex ante condition" for the thematic objective within Wielkopolska Regional Operational Program for the years 2014-2020 (WROP 2014+).

How do we monitor smart areas specialization?

An indispensable element related to the development of RIS3, and its subsequent implementation are the activities realized under the EDP. This process, in addition to ensuring a constant dialogue between economy, science and public sectors on the region's innovation policy implementation, is to improve this policy, react and minimize the negative impact socio-economic phenomena, and consequently recommend and set the path the economy based on knowledge and innovation.

RIS3 monitoring system (Figure 1), based on the accepted catalogue of indicators includes three levels of analysis:

- monitoring of areas of smart specialization;
- monitoring of strategic programs;
- benchmarking of the region's innovation on the national level.

The functioning of the monitoring and evaluation system is a permanent process, systematically providing comparable quantitative and qualitative data. Data collected according to a unified methodology at regular intervals, enabling analysis of dynamics of studied phenomena are taken from different sources.

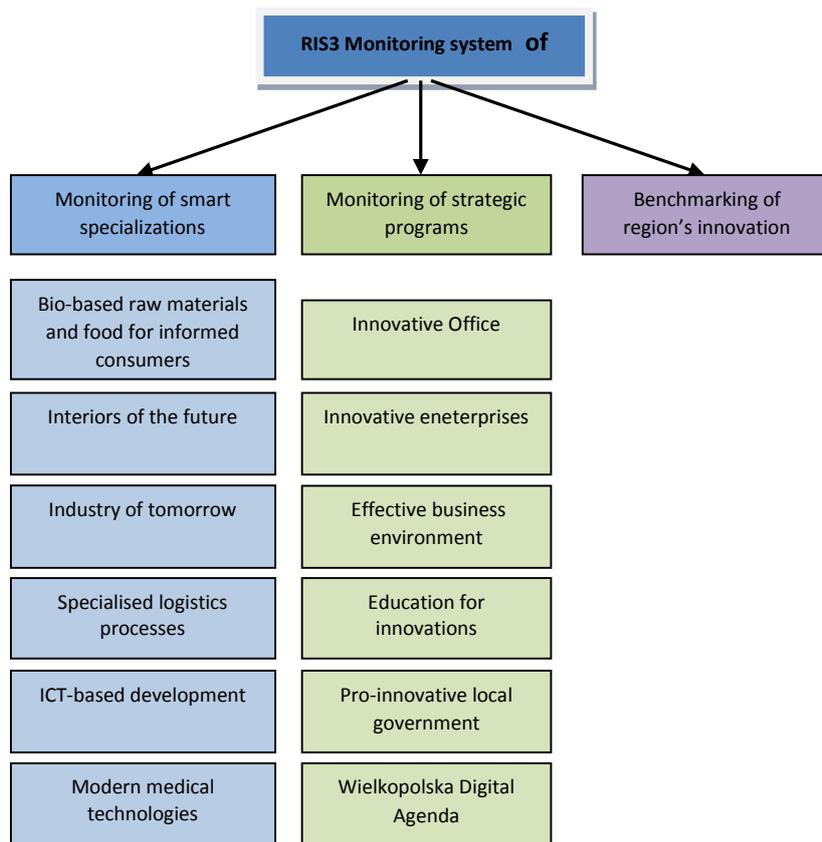


Figure 1. RIS 3 monitoring system
Source: Self-study of WOI

Wielkopolska Observatory of Innovation (WOI) within the Department of Economy of the Marshal Office is responsible for the monitoring of RIS3, additional research and analyses supporting the monitoring process of RIS3, in cooperation with other departments and observatories such as Regional Observatory of Labour Market and Observatory of Social Integration. Monitoring and evaluation activities are of a partnership nature and are included in the EDP. Therefore, drawn conclusions will be presented and discussed during meetings of Wielkopolska Smart Specialization Forum bringing together key actors of the regional innovation system. Results of this debate may lead to recommendations in the field of changes in the region's innovation policy.

How do we develop and support smart specializations in Wielkopolska?

Ecosystem concepts presented in the literature emphasize the importance of connections and cooperation of entire communities living in the territory. This means inclusion and further cooperation within the framework innovation system for both representatives of science, business, local governments and societies as the ultimate user of innovation (model quadruple helix). Taking into account the point of view of the demand side, that is, users and intermediaries of innovation, is a very important element of the identification and updating areas of smart specialization within previously mentioned EDP. Initiated in 2014 under update of the Regional Innovation Strategy for Wielkopolska entrepreneurial discovery process will be continued as a valuable source of knowledge about potential areas of the region's specialization. In Wielkopolska this process has been carefully thought out and planned, which does not mean that it excludes experimental activities, if they can bring the region closer to more accurate identification of specialization. The detailed process of

implementation recommendations within EDP presents figure 2. In summary, links of the process of

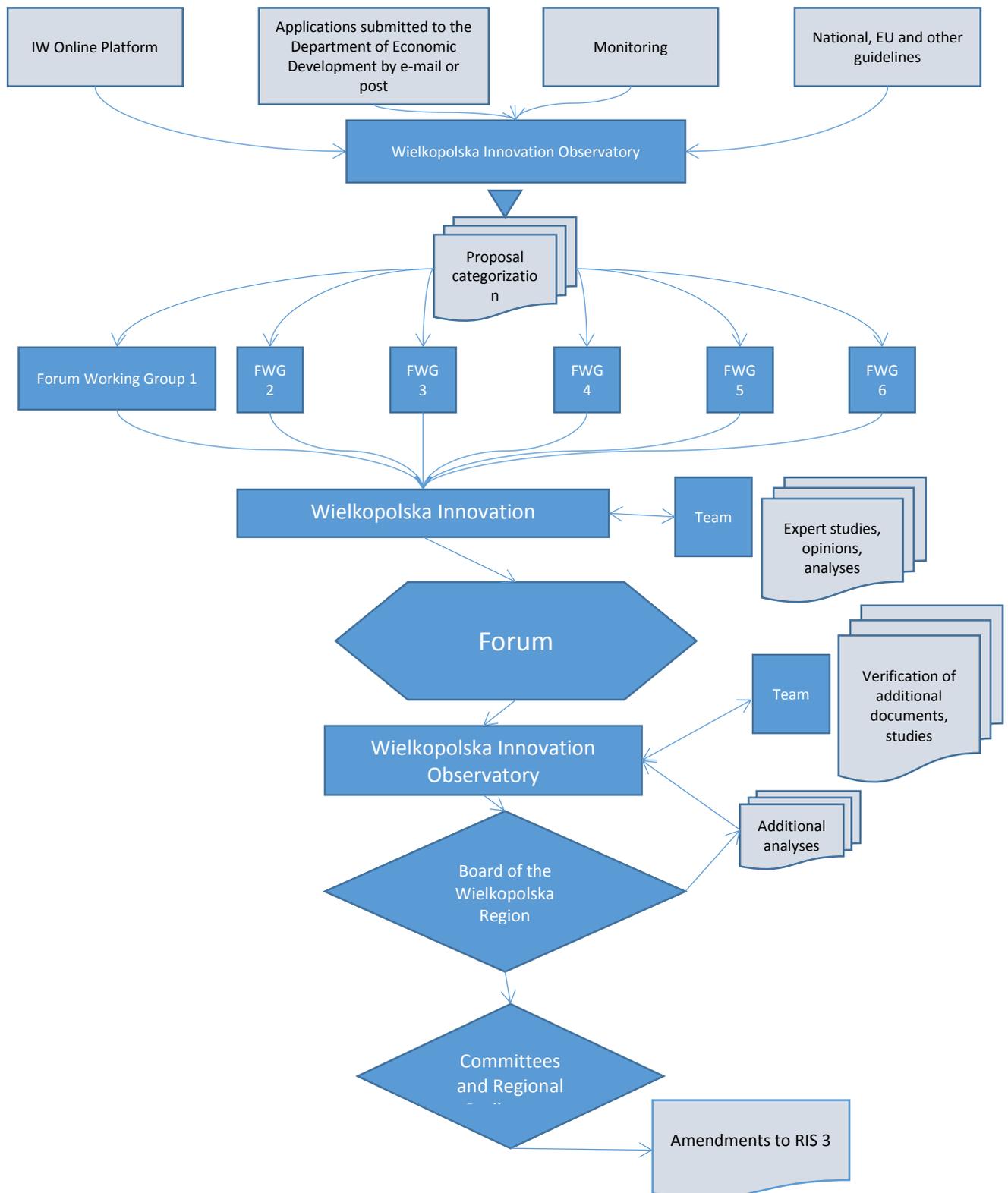


Figure 2. The detailed process of implementation recommendations within EDP.

Source: Self-study of WOI

entrepreneurial process discovery may cause changes to entries of Regional Innovation Strategy (RIS3). RIS3, in turn, affects the shape and selection of instruments for the implementation of the policy, in particular WROP 2014+. In the context of WROP 2014+, the Wielkopolska Observatory of Innovation team will analyze, among others current activity of applicants under the WROP2014+ in the areas of smart specialization. Much attention will be paid especially to PKD of the beneficiary and project. There will be analyzed activities of applicants from Wielkopolska under national support programs financed from EU funds - Intelligent Development Operational Program and Knowledge, Education, Development Operational Program. In the long term, there are also planned comprehensive studies on trends and changes in the areas of smart specialization.