

Concept note & Agenda

Smart Specialisation: monitoring and evaluation

State of the play and next steps

Committee of the Regions, room: JDE53

Brussels

24th January 2019



Concept note

Background

Over four years have now passed since *Smart Specialisation Strategies* (S3) officially entered European policy. This approach to territorial development through the promotion of smart, inclusive and sustainable growth represents a unique opportunity in contemporary policy for territorial development. For the first time, national and regional authorities across an area of more than five hundred million inhabitants are crafting and implementing their innovation policy according to a common set of principles and methodologies. A conspicuous debate has been generated on such policy experience, both among researchers and practitioners.

Rationale

Given its experimentalist and result-oriented approach, smart specialisation places a strong emphasis on the role of monitoring and evaluation. Throughout the years, the JRC has developed a solid framework for monitoring, in response of a very strong demand from national and regional authorities. As the end of the programming period approaches, it is time to debate on the state of the art of monitoring activities and how to evaluate S3.

In order to address these aspects, it is necessary to build a space for communication between *researchers* and *practitioners*, based on shared empirical and conceptual ground. This document proposes the agenda for one workshop aimed at strengthening such common space.

Goals

The workshop pursues two main objectives:

- Share the JRC knowledge and work on monitoring which include:
 - A basic conceptual framework for S3 monitoring, illustrated in detail in a Massive Open Online Course, available on the *iversity* platform
 - Empirical evidence on S3 monitoring related issues (state of the play, challenges, obstacles, etc.) collected through surveys and workshops.
- Start building a conceptual framework for S3 evaluation.

The workshop shall be dynamic, including elements of dialogue and interaction with participants, highlighting the links with the experiences of researchers and practitioners in the audience.

Participants

The workshop will be open to the public. Ideal audience for the event is estimated at around 50-60 people, to allow a focussed debate. Relevant DGs of the European Commission will be invited to participate. The JRC has invited a set of international experts in the field which will contribute through presentations as well as through the debate.

Expected results

- Enhanced effectiveness of the policy support initiatives provided by the JRC on monitoring.
- Preliminary steps to the development of an evaluation framework for Smart Specialisation.

Agenda

24th January 2019

Bâtiment Jacques Delors, Rue Belliard 99-101, Bruxelles: room: JDE53

09:00-09:30 **Welcome**

CoR representative
JRC
DG REGIO representative

09:30-11:00 **Monitoring Smart Specialisation – the JRC work**

The JRC work on monitoring has identified two set of challenges for S3 monitoring. Some are technical/conceptual in nature, whereas others are organisational and, *de facto*, underpin the former, namely:

- Technical and conceptual challenges
 - Monitoring S3 priorities, as opposed to monitoring the innovation system or the operational programme
 - Engaging stakeholders in monitoring
- Organisational challenges (I.e. Enabling conditions for S3 monitoring)
 - Capacities within public administration
 - National-Regional coordination

In the introductory session of the day, Carlo Gianelle, Fabrizio Guzzo and Elisabetta Marinelli will explain these aspects by going through the evidence collected through participatory and analytical activities conducted in the JRC, as well as the framework developed within the Massive Open Online Course on S3 monitoring. Following the presentation, there will be an open Q&A with the public.

Following their presentation, Dr Henning Kroll and Mr Emanuele Fabbri will discuss the presentation, providing insights (and criticism) from their experience.

The session will close with a Q&A aimed at understanding whether there is a shared understanding on monitoring Smart specialisation and –if not- identify the critical points and discuss them.

- Presentation: Dr Carlo Gianelle, Dr Fabrizio Guzzo, Dr Elisabetta Marinelli (30 minutes)
- Discussants (15 minutes each):
Dr Henning Kroll, ISI Fraunhofer
Mr Emanuele Fabbri Q&A, 30 minutes

Moderator: JRC representative

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30-12:30 **Monitoring S3: from the general to the specific**

The technical challenges (and the underpinning organisational ones) exposed in the first session will be discussed in the second part of the morning, with three experts involved in monitoring S3 from different perspectives (Academic, National and Regional policy maker/practitioner). The three experts will provide examples from their monitoring systems and discuss them in light of the general framework presented by the JRC. The session will be chaired and moderated by Mr Ken Guy.

- Presenters (15 minutes each)
 - Mr Luc Hulsman, Northern Netherlands Alliance – *Engaging SMEs in S3 monitoring through an innovation barometer.*
 - Dr Federica Bertamino, Italian Agency for Territorial Cohesion – *The challenge of national coordination of regional S3 monitoring*
 - Dr Ricard Esparza, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona – *Monitoring as a shared learning process – examples from Catalonia*
- Moderator: Ken Guy, Wise Guys Limited

12:30-13:30 *Lunch buffet*

13:30-15:15 **From monitoring to evaluation: what, how and why**

As the debate on S3 monitoring reaches maturity, it is necessary to start reflecting on the following logical and chronological step: S3 evaluation.

The session will revolve around the following questions:

- What questions should an S3 evaluation answer? Why?
 - Economic impact? Generation of social capital? etc.
- How should we evaluate?
 - Different methodologies
 - What should we focus on (projects, programmes; processes, etc.)

The presenters have been chosen because they can contribute to the discussion with different perspectives and methodologies. Following the presentation there will be an open discussion, the JRC will seek to understand, from the public, whether there are differences in thinking about evaluation among practitioners and researchers.

The session will be moderated by the JRC.

- Presenters (15 minutes each)
 - Prof. Francesco Prota – University of Bari
 - Prof. Attila Varga – University of Pecs
 - Dr. Yannis Toliás – Innovatia System
 - Angelos Sanopoulos – Monitoring and Evaluation Factory
- Moderator (JRC)

15:15-15:45 **Coffee break**

15:45 – 16:15 **Evaluating Smart Specialisation: where to start**

In this session Ken Guy will bring together the different contributions of the day and provide suggestions on how to start thinking about Evaluating S3. The presentation will be followed by a short Q&A.

- Presenters (20 minutes)
Mr Ken Guy – Wise Guys Ltd
- Moderator (JRC)

16:15-16:30 **Conclusions – How to prepare for 2021-2027**

Representatives of JRC, CoR and DG REGIO hierarchy comment on the day and draw conclusions for the future.

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