

# **Friends of Smart Specialisation**

**ERRIN S3 WG  
24<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

# Introduction

- Friends of Smart Specialisation – **who are we?**
- **What are we doing?**
  - Policy Labs – interactive learning spaces with regional/EU policy shapers
    - Policy Lab – Brussels – December 2018 (launch of FoSS)
    - Policy Lab – Leuven – April 2019
    - Policy Lab – Brussels – June 2019
  - Presentations at Conferences/Webinars
    - ❖ Triple Helix Workshop St Mary's University (June 2019)
    - ❖ Special Session at the European Regional Science Association Lyon Congress (27-30/8/19)
    - ❖ Forthcoming presentation at Regional Studies Association (RSA) Winter Conference (London, 14-15/11/19)
  - Policy paper – Aug 2019
- Key messages and next steps



# About...



- **Friends of Smart Specialisation**

An initiative from an independent group of experts and practitioners concerned for the future directions of S3

Started by Dimitri Corpakis, Jan Larosse, Richard Tuffs and supported by Alasdair Reid, Vladimir Cvijanovic and Christine Neve from EFIS, the European Future Innovation System Centre

Mailing list of +100 policy experts – including many ERRIN members

The European Future Innovation System (EFIS) Centre is a not for profit policy research lab and think tank to promote an enhanced understanding of the performance and future development perspectives of European, national and regional innovation systems, particularly in response to societal challenges...

<http://www.efiscentre.eu/>

# Mission

- The group's goal is to support the **mainstreaming of Smart Specialisation** as an instrument for strengthening the **multi-level European innovation system**.
- Smart Specialisation can play a leading role in European policy development and offers an opportunity to **align innovation policies** at different levels (regional, national, European) to **support systemic transformation**.
- Smart Specialisation can therefore support the development of a **common reference framework** for aligning forces to tackle common challenges and opportunities underpinning EU innovation policy.
- See our Mission Statement

## *Friends of Smart Specialisation*

### Mission Statement

(July 2019)

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The *Friends of Smart Specialisation* is an informal group of **independent** innovation policy experts, set up in Brussels in 2018. ¶

The group's goal is to enhance the smart specialisation<sup>1</sup> approach as an **instrument** for strengthening the multi-level European innovation system. The group therefore aspires to be a **resource** for policy makers and shapers at all levels. ¶

The following 10 principles are proposed to guide the further work of the group towards **mainstreaming** smart specialisation in a coherent way: ¶

In the group's view, Smart Specialisation:

•→ is a key feature of **multi-level governance** of innovation and

# Need for mainstreaming Smart Specialisation across EU transformation policies

- Still predominantly silo approach (Research and Innovation, Cohesion, Industry, Agriculture, Energy, Transport, Environment)
- Convergence paths still unclear...
  - Synergies? Missions? Value chains?
  - New Commission portfolios seek better coordination?
- Smart Specialisation could be a catalyst and an integrating force for change

# Policy Paper



## Challenges

- Smart specialisation is increasingly becoming part of the policy discourse in Europe but has it found its right position? Should it not play a more influential role in policy making?
- In order to become a driver for transformative policies throughout Europe it must break away from its attribution as an 'enabling condition' for accessing ERD Funds in Cohesion Policy.
- How can we convince other policy domains and levels of the advantages of smart specialisation for their own domains and the benefits of S3 as a central feature of innovation policy at large?

# Key points – where S3 can impact



- Regions and territorial development policies
  - ❖ *Place-based transformation strategies*
- Research and innovation policies
  - ❖ *Missions*
- New industrial policy
  - ❖ *Strategic value chains*

# Regions and territorial development

- Regions are **locations of transformation** as we witness the restructuring of the global economy (winners and losers – e.g. agglomeration effects): but there are opportunities for all
- S3 can **apply to ALL regions and ALL policy levels**
- S3 provides methodological tools for place-based approach with **better targeting on opportunities** for transformation, e.g. EDP
- S3 engages all **own resources**, not only ERDF. S3 is **not limited** to priorities
- S3 provides strategic information and networks to **connect into global and EU value chains through smart complementarities** e.g. Thematic S3 Platforms...
- Future S3 should be more aware of the territorial impact of specialisation strategies and how they relate to **functional areas** (e.g. city-regions, cross-border regions, macro-regions)

# Research and innovation – missions



- Missions set big **strategic goals** for societal challenges that can mobilise citizen engagement, experimental public policies and joint investments (a European policy framework for smart specialisation)
- Missions could incorporate the **EDP methodology** for governance
- The **coupling of missions and S3** is needed to avoid technocratic top-down goals and targets
- **Smart complementarities**, connecting strengths of local ecosystems, is the method to align public R&D for common objectives in the European Research Area

# Smart specialisation and strategic value chains

- Promoting **strategic value chains** is a core part of new EU industrial policy
  - Strategic Forum for Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI)
- Smart specialisation is an alternative industrial policy methodology, as ‘smart complementarity’ can form alliances of partners confronting Europe’s global competitors seeking to dominate global markets, with **new ‘European’ value propositions** driven by our common missions.
- S3 can align the **European network** of (digital) innovation hubs

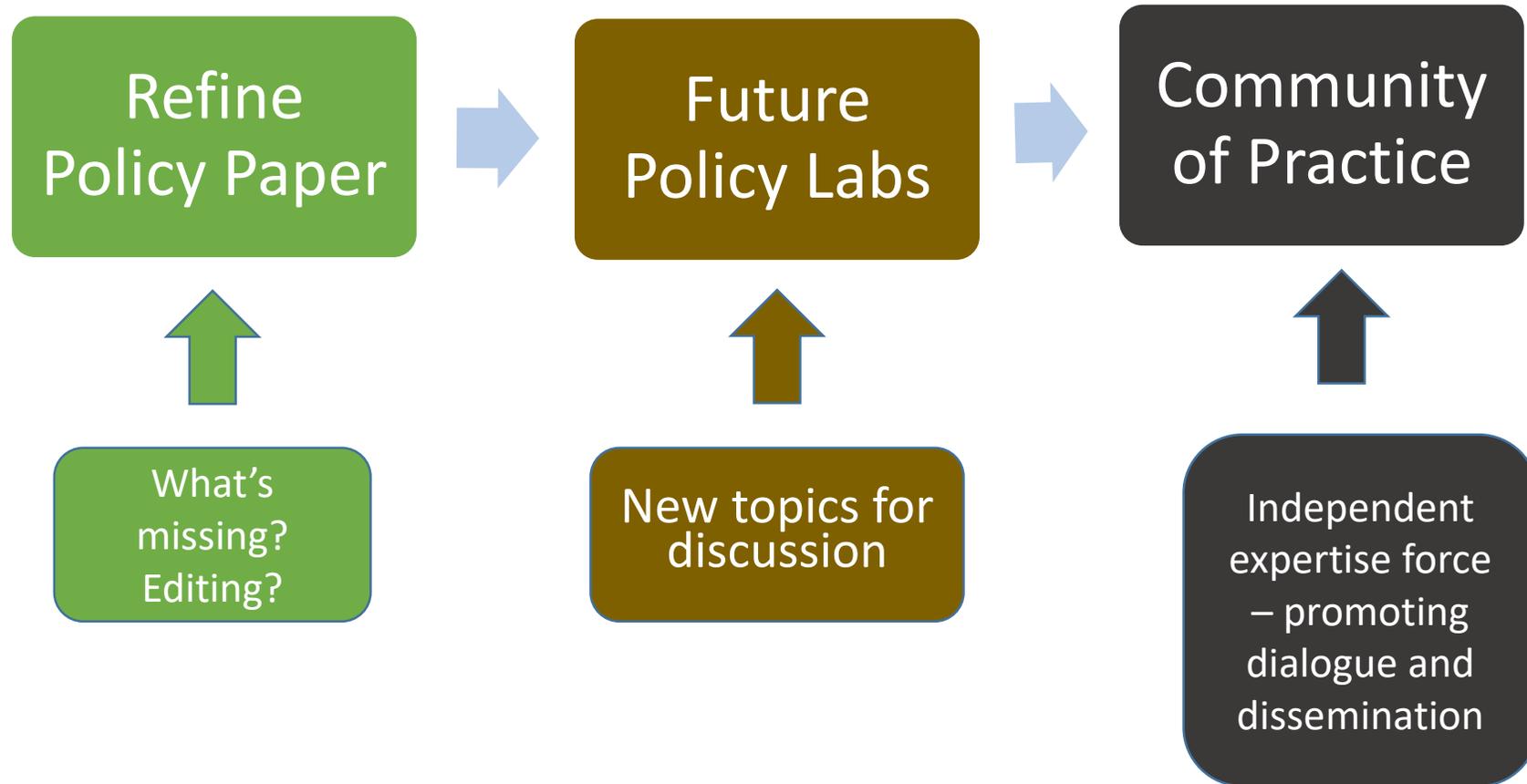


# Towards mainstreaming...key directions



- S3 must be part of all EU transformation strategies incorporating visions focusing on place-based regional innovation ecosystems
- S3 should be outward-looking building on complementarity and coordination not just competitive advantage (see Component 5 and cluster internationalisation)
- S3 needs and can stimulate improved multi-stakeholder governance and leadership
- S3 lends itself to story-telling and narratives and can encourage citizen engagement
- S3 should strengthen links with educational and training policies and digital transformation
- S3 priorities should be more strongly linked to and supported by EIT KICs
- S3 must be firmly linked to Integrated Territorial Investment strategies.
- S3 becomes part of the EU semester policy monitoring of transformation policies.

# Next steps...



A strong  
impulse for a  
new  
generation  
regional S3  
policy making  
with RIS3 2.0

A new S3 'Vanguard' RIS3 2.0... frontrunners for change

Compare and share new and best policy practice

Actively contribute to European policy development (S3 2.0 and Future Industrial Policy)

Share practical challenges...synergies (e.g. Digital Innovation Hubs, Centres of Vocational Excellence Centres...)

Tackle the barriers to co-investment: diagnostic monitoring of 'readiness'

Collaborate with FoSS...(Policy Labs, Joint papers)

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