



Changing Patterns of Territorial Policy: Smart Specialisation and Innovation in Europe

First SMARTER Conference on Smart Specialisation and Territorial Development
Wednesday 28th (Registration and Welcome Reception), 29th & 30th September 2016 (Conference)
Hotel Melià Lebreros, Seville, Spain

Co-organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the Regional Studies Association

Smart Specialisation represents the most comprehensive industrial policy experience being implemented in contemporary Europe and it is a cornerstone in the European Union effort to drive countries and regions out of the crisis and guarantee opportunities for growth for each and every one of its territories. Thanks to this effort, for the first time, public authorities and stakeholders across an area of more than five hundred million inhabitants are crafting their innovation policy according to a common set of principles and methodologies.

Conceived within the reformed Cohesion policy of the European Commission, smart specialisation is a place-based policy promoting economic transformation and investment in innovative activities in selected areas of the socio-economic system in order to achieve a smart, inclusive and sustainable growth.

The smart specialisation approach is characterised by the identification of strategic areas for intervention based both on the analysis of the strengths and potential of the economy and on a process of entrepreneurial discovery with wide stakeholder involvement. It embraces a wide view of innovation that goes beyond research-oriented and technology-based activities, and requires a sound logic of intervention supported by effective monitoring mechanisms.

This conference aims to take stock of the smart specialisation experience and assess its current state of the art both in terms of conceptual developments and practical implementation. It offers to a limited number of participants from academia, European Institutions and territorial authorities, a unique opportunity to discuss these issues, to define the scope and main avenues for future research and policy analysis, and to address the challenges confronting policy makers and practitioners.

The conference organisers are keen to attract papers that address the whole spectrum of topics, disciplines, and methodologies encompassed by the smart specialisation approach, including contributions from all areas of regional analysis with a link to smart specialisation.

As well as academic submissions, papers contributed by practitioners and by a combination of academics and practitioners are very much welcomed.

Papers reflecting on similar policy experiments outside Europe would also be welcome. There is a need to learn from best practice from all around the world to increase our understanding and knowledge. These papers may consider the especially acute problems of doing S3 in less developed regions and exploring the scope for inter regional mentoring and learning.

For all themes, exploring the opportunities opened by the smart specialisation approach, and the perspective it can afford as a policy framework, is desirable and will be highlighted. Themes of interest to the conference include:

1. Smart specialisation five years on:

Smart specialisation at play: is it a real change?

Smart specialisation from design to implementation: lessons, challenges, opportunities, experiences.

Smart specialisation across sectors, policy areas, and intervention instruments: possibilities and constraints.

Smart specialisation beyond borders: experiences from outside Europe.

2. Governance and policy processes:

Models of local governance of smart specialisation and territorial development strategies.
The multi-level governance of smart specialisation and territorial development strategies.
The Entrepreneurial Discovery Process: conditions for institutionalisation, sustainability, replicability.
Forms of stakeholder involvement: from consultation to co-creation of policies.
Monitoring and evaluation of public policy: between analysis and advocacy, beyond audit.
Methods of participatory governance.

3. Actors:

Public administrations in smart specialisation and territorial policy: sticking or changing?
Citizens' involvement in strategy design and implementation.
Universities and Higher Education Institutions in smart specialisation.
Research and Technology Organisations, Business Incubators, Clusters, Science Parks in smart specialisation.
Financial Institutions in smart specialisation.

4. The urban, regional and trans-regional dimension:

Regions, cities, and city-regions.
Rural and urban areas: between rivalry and cooperation.
Urban strategies for innovation and development.
Smart specialisation in rural and sparsely populated areas.
Trans-regional and trans-national cooperation.

5. European and territorial economic analysis:

Innovation and growth performance of places and organisations.
Changing distribution of economic activities.
Agglomeration and territorial integration.
Regional and urban resilience and evolution.
Qualitative and/or quantitative policy evaluation of research and innovation funding programmes (e.g. FP7, H2020, Structural Funds and/or national programmes).

6. Organisation of production and sectors:

Clusters and emerging economic networks.
Interregional, international value chains.
Emerging technologies and activities.

Submission of papers

Please submit proposals for papers in the form of a 400-500 word abstract (text only, no pictures, graphs or tables) through the Regional Studies Association online portal by **Thursday 30th June 2016**. Proposals will be considered by the Conference Programming Committee against the criteria of originality, interest and subject balance. For conference updates, please visit www.regionalstudies.org/conferences/conference/smart-specialisation

Conference Organisation

Co-organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the Regional Studies Association

RSA Organiser:

Please contact Lesa Reynolds at lesa.reynolds@regionalstudies.org for further details and questions regarding abstract submission.