The European Commission’s science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre
Mutual Learning Exercise on National Practices in Widening Participation and Strengthening Synergies - Country Visit to Spain, 10th-11th January 2017

Experiences from Stairway to Excellence

Karel HAEGEMAN,  
JRC.B3 Territorial Development  
Karel-herman.haegeman@ec.europa.eu  
Madrid, 11th of January 2018
**Spreading excellence in a RIS3 context**

### Main issues hampering optimal capturing of H2020 funding

#### Quality of governance
- Need for more participatory (RIS3) governance
- Administrative, legal and technical issues
- Structural bottlenecks in the R&I ecosystem

#### Capacity building
- Lack of qualified human resources
- Lack of business sector innovation capabilities and weak innovative entrepreneurship
- Lack of openness, weak integration in EU networks

#### Innovation
- Weak links between academia/PROs and business
- Limited use of available funding and financing sources for R&I
- Limited use of research infrastructures

### Projects in place to address these issues

#### Build regional capacity - RIS3 support to Lagging Regions Project (EP funded)
- Organise participatory governance and monitoring based on entrepreneurial discovery
- Develop Human resources/mobility plans
- Develop & implement long term (RIS3) strategies

#### Explore different entry points to H2020 - Stairway to Excellence Project (EP funded)
- Training Managing Authorities to build capacities for accessing H2020 open calls
- Collaboration between regions and EIT Innovation Communities (Regional Innovation Scheme)
- Collaboration between MSs/regions and Joint Undertakings through MoUs

#### Support to universities - Higher Education for Smart Specialisation Project
- Align higher education with regional economy
- Strengthen role of education in RIS3 and regional innovation systems
- Inform EU and national policy-making
Lagging Regions: aims and coverage

Support the refinement and implementation of the RIS3 of selected EU regions

Generate lessons and a model for other regions

Test-bed for theories on S3 and for understanding RIS3

S3 as entry-point to address wider structural issues
RIS3 support to lagging regions: bottom-up approach

**Business idea as main driver**

- **Business idea**
  - E.g. use of wine-making residues
- **Idea decomposed**
  - Research and innovation components and fundability
- **Idea refined**
  - Partners, business and research aspects, roadmap, funding sources

**Project Development Lab 1 (PDL 1)**

**Online consultation and PDL 2**

**Bottlenecks for implementation**

- **Peer review**
  - Board of critical friends
- **Analysis of role of KETs**
- **Mapping international R&I collaborations**
- **Local Working groups**
  - Mobility & Governance
- **RDI funding guide and case studies**
- **Transnational working groups on RIS3 monitoring and governance**

**State aid issues**

- Avoid double funding between national/regional calls
- Sustainability/viability
- Role for KETs
- Need for champions/leaders
- Address training needs
- International scope

**Targeted support: bottom-up approach to address structural issues**

**RIS3 support to lagging regions: bottom-up approach**
Stairway to Excellence I & II (S2E): 2014-2017

Launched in 2014 to support EU13 MSs and regions to develop and exploit synergies between EU funding.

- **Policy Insights** - #1 on "Lessons Learnt from S2E National Events" & #2 on "EU13 Participation in International Science"

- **National Policy Events & Joint Statements** – main challenges and possible actions in each EU13 MS

- **National and Regional "Facts and Figures" & "Country Reports"** of all EU13 MSs - empirical facts and R&I ecosystems

- **25 Synergy Examples** - cases of combined funding

- **R&I Regional Viewer** - visualise main economic and R&I indicators

http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/stairway-to-excellence
## S2E III - Closing the innovation gap & helping achieve excellence in EU MS & regions (extended to EU28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity building for increased H2020 participation</th>
<th>Testing new scenarios for combining funding sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trainings for MAs and RIS3 teams</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collaboration of MAs and JUs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Targeting less developed territories</td>
<td>- Case of cleansky JU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Aims to increase H2020 'participation'</td>
<td>- Match-making with Cleansky JU, FCH JU, BBI JU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Governance of PROs</strong></td>
<td>- Good practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Improving quality of PRO governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Aims to increase excellence and support innovation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Project Development Labs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Collaboration of MAs and KICs under RIS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support international networking</td>
<td>- Test phase with EIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Explore variety of funding sources</td>
<td>- MoU between JRC and EIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Thematic S3 platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multi-level governance of synergies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Funding guidance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transnational working group on multi-level governance</td>
<td>- Mapping funding and financing in selected areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collaboration with LAGREG</td>
<td>- Case of R&amp;I in energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explore other synergies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Synergies among structural funds (EAFRD, ERDF, ESF,...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- EIB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HESS objectives

**HESS Core Objectives**

- Integrate Higher Education and the Knowledge Triangle into S3 policy mix
- Promote synergetic use of ESIF and other public funds to incentivise HEIs
- Strengthen the position of HEIs in S3 governance structures

**HESS Secondary Objectives**

- Promote cooperation between HEIs and other actors in the quadruple helix at regional level
- Champion reform within HEIs to make them more entrepreneurial and engaged in smart specialisation
Critical issues in synergies

- National and regional capacity to implement RIS3 (and not just OP) and to 'chase' funding (both manpower and skills)
- Synergies: which funds and for what purpose?
- High need for guidance (a funding GPS) at the right level of granularity (demand driven)
- Societal challenges and related R&I agenda's lack a single challenge owner, which is reflected in the funding structure
- Bottlenecks in taking up synergies are connected to structural bottlenecks in the national/regional R&I system
- Importance of considering different doors of H2020
- For some territories wide targeted support is needed if we want to see a change