



Workshop V

The role of Cultural Heritage in Sustainable Development: EU policies in the Mediterranean region

Module 2 - EU Smart Specialization Strategy, Cultural Heritage and Innovation in the Mediterranean Region

Workshop V

O papel do património cultural no desenvolvimento sustentável: políticas da UE na região mediterrânica

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Duration: 3 hours

University of Évora

Workshop Format:

Online training.

An expository session, followed by individual research and a final debate.

Equipment required:

Laptop or other device that allows online search and selection of information.

Module 2 - EU Smart Specialization Strategy, Cultural Heritage and Innovation in the Mediterranean Region

Módulo 1- Estratégias de Especialização Inteligente Europeias, Património Cultural e Inovação na Região Mediterrânica

Module description:

Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) are an EU innovation policy approach that encourages regions to focus investment and research on areas where they have unique strengths and competitive advantages. Introduced in the early 2000s by economists such as Dominique Foray, the concept was formally adopted by the European Commission in 2010 as part of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It subsequently became a requirement for regions to access cohesion funds for innovation between 2014 and 2020.

S3 encourages regions to move beyond traditional sector-based strategies and instead identify niche areas of competitive advantage through a bottom-up, participatory process. At the heart of this approach lies the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP), a dynamic mechanism involving stakeholders from across the public, private, academic, and civil society sectors. This ensures that S3 strategies are both evidence-based and locally grounded.

Since 2010, the EU's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the S3 Community of Practice have supported regions in designing and implementing their Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3), offering guidance, peer learning opportunities, and analytical tools.

This workshop provides an introduction to the conceptual foundations, methodological frameworks, and practical implementation of S3, drawing on key findings from recent systematic literature reviews.

The role of higher education institutions in shaping smart specialisation is also addressed, highlighting their contributions through research, entrepreneurship, regional development, and human capital formation.

Finally, participants will explore how cultural heritage has been integrated into Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) across different regional contexts in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean.

Learning objectives:

- To understand the concept of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3)
- To recognise the methodologies for the development and implementation of S3
- To become familiar with the S3 Community of Practice of the European Commission
- To gain insight into the findings of systematic literature reviews related to Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3)
- To explore how cultural heritage has been integrated into Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) across different regional contexts in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean.

Readings and resources:

S3 Community of Practice: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communities-and-networks/s3-community-of-practice_en

Sorvik, Jens; Kleibrink, Alexander; Gnamus, Ales (2016): Eye@RIS3 tool. European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC) [Dataset] PID: <http://data.europa.eu/89h/jrc-s3p-eye-ris3>

Foray, D., Eichler, M., & Keller, M. (2021). [*Smart specialization strategies—Insights gained from a unique European policy experiment on innovation and industrial policy design*](#).

Review of Evolutionary Political Economy, 2, 83–103.

Hegyí, F.B. & Prota, F. (2021) [*Assessing Smart Specialisation: Monitoring and Evaluation Systems*](#), EUR 30654 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. ISBN 978-92-76-32592-5, doi:10.2760/443642, JRC123734.

Stanojev, J., & Gustafsson, C. (2021). [Smart Specialisation Strategies for Elevating Integration of Cultural Heritage into Circular Economy](#). *Sustainability*, 13(7), 3685.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073685>

Prota, F. & Calò, E. (2024) [How to Evaluate the Smart Specialisation Strategy? A Methodological Proposal Under the Umbrella of Complexity Theory](#).

Ferreira, H., Marques, C.S. & Farinha, L. (2025). "[Regional Smart Specialisation Strategies: A Systematic Literature Review](#)". *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*.

Rosas Rodríguez, B., & Demmler, M. (2023). [Revisión sistemática de la literatura sobre especialización inteligente: Perspectivas y oportunidades futuras](#). *Revista de El Colegio de San Luis*, 13(24).

Keykha, A. (2022). "[Identifying the components of universities smart specialization strategy](#)". *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 28(1), 93–130.

Calza, F., Carayannis, E. G., Panetti, E., & Parmentola, A. (2022). [The role of university in the smart specialization strategy: Exploring how university–industry interactions change in different technological domains](#). *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 69(6), 2649–2658.

Additional Readings:

Laranja, M., Edwards, J.H., Pinto, H. & Foray, D. (2020). [Implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies in Portugal: An assessment](#), EUR 30287 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-21047-4, doi:10.2760/903016, JRC121189.

Santos, A.; Edwards, J. & Neto, P. (2021). "[Smart Specialisation Strategies and Regional Productivity: A preliminary assessment in Portugal](#)," JRC Research Reports JRC124389, Joint Research Centre.



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