

07 Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation (S3P - Industry)

Type of support / service available

The European Commission supports the modernisation of Europe's Industry in order to ensure the EU's global competitiveness. This objective is supported by a number of EC's Directorates-General (DGs), including JRC, through a focused alignment of their multi-level policies.



S3P-Industry fosters synergies between various funding sources.

One of the driving forces behind the joint initiative of the S3P-Industry is to foster synergies and complementarities between diverse funding sources with the objective to accelerate the development of joint investment projects supported by possible synergies between European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the EU program for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME), Horizon 2020 and other funding sources. Despite the differences among the main objectives of these funding sources, through facilitating the synergies among them, these sources may complement greatly the principle objectives of the S3P-IM to support the optimal and effective implementation of cohesion policy funds for high quality industrial modernisation and investment projects and to better align innovation actions at national, regional and local levels.

To facilitate concrete cross-regional innovation, several support mechanisms will be made available for partnerships operating under the platform. These support mechanisms are adjusted to the advancement of a partnership and to the needs of the partnership and of industry, whether they need analytical, expert support or actual funding provided by the DGs involved in the initiative.

The Smart Specialisation Platform of the Joint Research Centre is the main contact point for the initiative that aims to facilitate an open process for interregional collaboration on business-driven investments, for agreed innovation themes. The role of the S3 Platform is to provide direct assistance to EU regions to initiate interregional partnerships, as well as to structure the subsequent process, providing a continuous advisory and analytical support for partnerships. Thus, the key objective of the S3P-IM is to support the efforts of committed EU regions and member states to work together in developing a pipeline of investment projects connected to specific thematic areas of S3 through interregional cooperation. Therefore the platform will be co-developed and co-led by the regions themselves along a pre-defined workflow steps¹.

1. For the description of each workflow steps and sub-steps please see the page: <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/how-does-it-work>.

Relevance for regional authorities

The participating DGs are now increasingly aligning their collective efforts with an aim to support new strategic growth areas including those linked to the development in six strategic, cross-cutting areas, such as key enabling technologies (KETs), clean vehicles and transport, bio-based products, construction and raw materials, plus smart grids. These, and other technologies, are now recognised as the means to address important societal challenges, by facilitating new ways to new products and services and effectively leading to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. They also play an important role in the research, innovation and cluster strategies of many industries. These technologies are expected to enable applications required for improving resource efficiency, boosting the fight against climate change, or allowing for healthy ageing. In other words, the role of these technologies is ‘enabling’, ‘horizontal’ and ‘ubiquitous’ in both new and traditional products.

Policy context

The European Commission encourages its Member States and regions to consider supporting potential spill-over effects of KETs-based solutions and, as a result, strengthen existing and possibly developing new European industrial value chains. One way this can be done is through the integration of these technologies into national and regional Smart Specialisation strategies. The S3 framework, coupled with an increase in interregional connectivity, can give rise to cooperation in deployment, diffusion or even co-innovation of applications. Such dynamics may be distributed between regions specialised in the basic inventions and regions investing in specific application domains.

How to use

Following the launch of the S3P–Industry platform, on 2nd June 2016, EU regions were invited to propose partnerships, related to specific thematic areas linked to industrial modernisation, in which they wish to collaborate and commit to co-invest in the development of new European value chains with other regions or member states.

A partnership in a new thematic area can be proposed by at least two EU regions or member states, which will act as leading partners in the partnership provided that their proposal satisfies a number of key elements to be considered qualified. Expressions of interest for setting-up and co-leading new partnerships in specific thematic areas for industrial modernisation may be submitted through the S3P – Industry website².

Partnerships operating under S3P–Industry are supported by the participating DGs in their efforts for developing a pipeline of joint investment projects connected to specific thematic areas of smart specialisation priorities through interregional cooperation. The S3P–Industry is therefore co-developed and co-led by the regions and member states themselves, ensuring an active participation and commitment of the so-called quadruple helix actors, i.e. industry and related business organisations and clusters, as well as research institutions, academia and civil society. This combination will play a key role in connecting regional authorities with industrial and market interests and needs.

Qualified S3P–Industry partnerships³ currently operating under the S3P–Industry are covering the following thematic areas:



2. The expression of interest form for S3P - Industry is available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/S3thematicplatform_expression_of_interest

3. For further information on partnership, please visit the S3P – Industry partnership website: <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/thematic-areas>. Please note that further thematic partnerships are under evaluation as of writing this report on 14th of July 2017 in the field of integrated photonics and tourism (safety).

The S3P-Industry has a functional email⁴ to allow national and regional authorities, and other stakeholders, to have a specific contact point to the initiative, as well as a website⁵.

Impact

The competitiveness and growth of European industry depends very much on the capacity of Europe's regions to provide a vibrant ecosystem for innovation that facilitates cooperation between industry, academia and other innovation actors. To achieve this, an integrated approach is necessary to ensure strong involvement of industry in the implementation of RIS3 strategies and intensify cross-regional cooperation with a specific focus on making better use of clusters and fostering industrial modernisation for which the S3P – Industry provides a framework.

Since the launch of the S3P – Industry, the qualified partnerships have advanced with their thematic areas along the workflow steps. Their advancement is depicted in the following graph, allowing the S3P – Industry to monitor and evaluate progress in line with the objectives of the initiative.

4. JRC-S3P-INDUSTRY@ec.europa.eu

5. <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/industrial-modernisation>