

From ED to multi-stakeholderism, have RIS3 fostered regional learning spaces and trajectories in CEE?#

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2018 SMARTER conference, 28 September 2018

Proposal for the paper accepted for the Special Issue of the Regional Studies journal

Motivation

- Difficulty to measure governance quality during the smart specialisation (RIS3) process
- Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) tends to be based on Triple Helix (TH) rather than Quadruple Helix (QH) and rather discontinuous, too
- The CEE regions score below the EU average in terms of governance (excluding SE of the Czech Republic and Estonia)
- This work was supported by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union, under Grant Agreement number: 710659 – ONLINE-S3.

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What the article is about

- We compare the process of design and implementation of Research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3) in eight CEE EU MS: the Baltic countries (EE, LV, LT), SI, the Visegrád countries (SK and CZ) and HR and RO from the South East Europe. Furthermore, we analyse the Czech South Moravian region and the region of West Romania
- Theoretical framework based on the Learning Regions literature and the multi-stakeholder concept
- Empirical analysis based on case studies (semi-structured interviews with 7 experts and secondary sources)
- We claim that RIS3 can improve governance of R&I systems when EDP is continuous and based on multi-stakeholderism, wide range of actors and learning of RIS3 participants. As such it fosters Regional Learning Spaces.

Theoretical framework

- Multi-stakeholder governance
 - Two polar opposites of EDP: it could be 'instrumentalised' vs. an inclusive multi-stakeholder process
- Learning Regions (Boekema et al., 2000, Asheim, 2007), Localised Learning (Lorenzen, 2007), Learning in Space (Hassink & Klaerding, 2012), Learning trajectories (Capello and Lenzi, 2018); EDP potentially fits into all of these categories;
- Regional Learning Spaces

Specificities of CEE* (I)

Governance characteristics	State and centralisation	EU ranking for quality of governance / regional variations	Innovation performance ⁱ	University/industry research collaboration ^{vi} (rank in EU28)	ESI funds allocated to TO1 ^v per capita ^{viii} / ranking (highest to lowest in EU28)
Estonia	Neoliberal, simple polity (unitary, executive government driven)*	16 / No regional variation measured (single NUTS2)*	Moderate innovator	13	1
Latvia	Neoliberal, simple (unitary, executive government driven)*	21 / No regional variation measured (single NUTS2)*	Moderate innovator	22	3
Lithuania	Neoliberal, simple (unitary, executive government driven)*	23 / No regional variation measured (single NUTS2)*	Moderate innovator	12	5
Slovenia	Neocorporatist, compound (unitary, consensus based), but changing*	17 / No regional variation measured (single NUTS2)*	Strong innovator	16	6

Specificities of CEE* (II)

Governance characteristics	State and centralisation	EU ranking for quality of governance / regional variations	Innovation performance ⁱ	University/industry research collaboration ^{vi} (rank in EU28)	ESI funds allocated to TO1 ^v per capita ^{viii} / ranking (highest to lowest in EU28)
Czech Republic	Embedded neoliberal, somewhat decentralised (fading stakeholder power)*	18 / Moderate regional variations (includes best CEE regions)*	Moderate innovator	18	4
Slovakia	Embedded neoliberal ^o centralised (from government finance) ^{vii}	20 / small regional variations ⁱⁱⁱ	Moderate innovator	24	2
Croatia	Nonregime (weak state) ^o , strongly centralised	26 / No regional variation ^{iv}	Moderate innovator	27	11
Romania	Nonregime (weak state) ^o , strongly centralised ⁱⁱ	27 / Large regional variations ⁱⁱⁱ	Modest innovator	23	18

RIS3 in the design phase

- Two questions: has EDP involved a broad range of stakeholders and ‘learning in space’?; was EDP a top-down process or did it stimulate a process of creative co-design?
- Among studied regions/countries EDP has been inclusive in West Romania, Lithuania and Slovenia, even though not always consistently so; other regions/countries had a narrower RIS3 that has not run smoothly
- a creative co-design was only fostered in West Romania, the South Moravian Region and Lithuania. In others: more or less a top-down approach

Extending EDP into the implementation phase: evidence from the case studies



- Has the EDP been extended into implementation? How has this reflected on 'regional learning trajectory'?
- The regional learning spaces have been fostered by a continuous EDP with a broad range of stakeholders, based on a multi-stakeholder approach – the case of West Romania
- Slovenia and the South Moravian Region have designed and implemented their RIS3 quite well; Their RIS3 processes have been somewhat based on a multi-stakeholder approach: the South Moravian Region's EDP has not been fully based on QH, and Slovenia only managed to extend EDP quite late; Lithuania experimented with novel and more multi-stakeholder type governance, even though it did not continue EDP into implementation
- RIS3 has not developed the same way in Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, Croatia and, at the national level, Czech Republic and Romania

Conclusion

- The RIS3 process could enhance governance of the R&I systems in regions/countries (but multi-stakeholder governance and continuous EDP are not guaranteed)
- Extending EDP into the implementation phase depending on structure of ESIF operational programmes (cases of South Moravia and West Romania) or factors at national level (Slovenia, Lithuania)
- RIS3 2.0 should be based on multi-stakeholderism and be continuous; aligning RIS3 with territorial realities so as to foster RIS3 partnerships

* Source for the tables on CEE

- Karo et al. (2017, pp. 275-6) and Charron, Dijkstra and Lapuente (2014), And authors: ⁰Bohle and Greskovits (2012), ⁱ EC, European innovation scoreboard ⁱⁱAER, The state of regionalisation in Romania (aer.eu/ror2017-weeks-focus-romania), ⁱⁱⁱ Charron et al. (2014) ^{iv} Charron, Dijkstra and Lapuente (2015) ^v. Source: Cohesion data (cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/themes/1) ^{vi} Data taken from The Global Innovation Index. ^{vii} UCLG and OECD (2016). ^{viii} Population data is from Eurostat for 1/1/2013.



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