



SMART REGIONS 2.0 Conference

Maximising Europe's innovation potential

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Messukeskus Expo and Convention Centre
Helsinki, Finland

@EU_Regional #SmartRegions



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Towards a Smart Specialization of the Canary Islands:
Building an international hub for sustainable development



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Canary Islands

An EU Outermost region

- 7.500 km² (1.5% Spain)
- Part of Macaronesia with Azores, Madeira, Cape Verde
- Near Morocco, Sahara, Mauritania, Senegal...
- Approx. 40% protected area

Population

- 2.1M (4.5% Spain)
- 27% growth since 1999
- Unemployment: 26% (2016)

GDP: 3.9% Spain

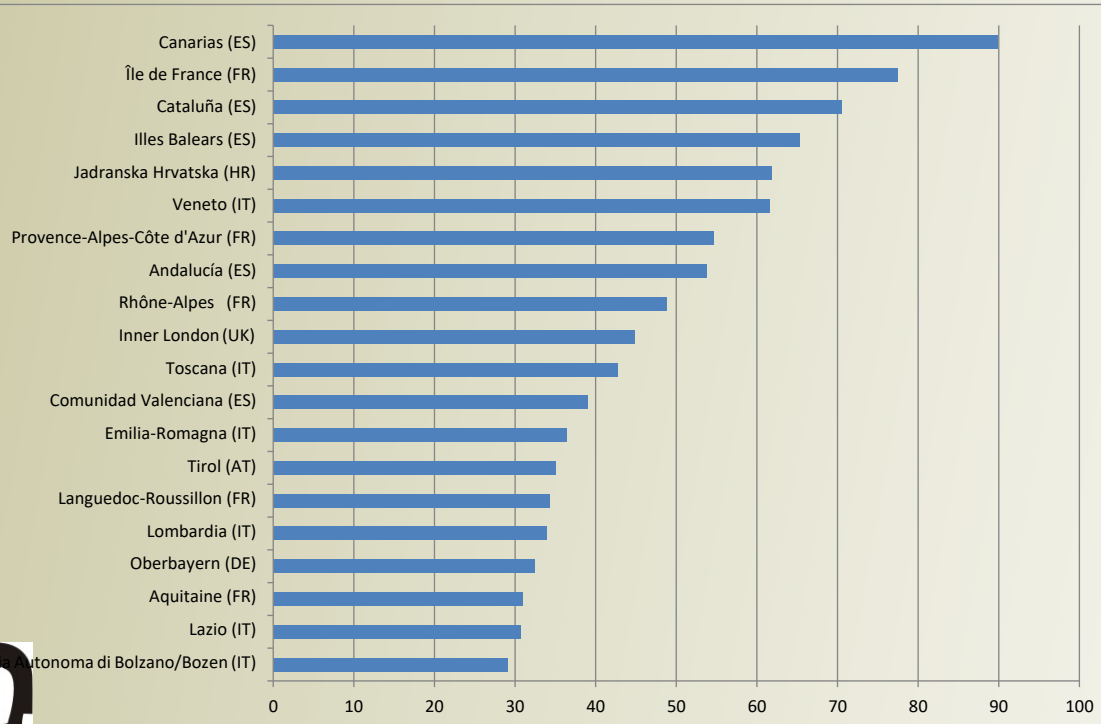


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Canary Islands: A Tourism Economy

Top 20 EU tourist regions by NUTS 2 regions, 2013 - EUROSTAT

(million nights spent by residents and non-residents in tourist accommodation establishments)



Impactur 2014

- 31,4% GDP
- 35,9% jobs
- 8,3% Pub Expnd
- 30,4% Taxes

Labor productivity
below average



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Canary Islands: Employment evolution

Worst years: 2012-2013-2014 → During the RIS3 preparation!!!



Unemployment & occupation rates, wrt TOTAL population –
Unemployment rate wrt ACTIVE population



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The big challenge of Smart Specialization

- How can we promote discussion about R&D and innovation strategies during a harsh economic crisis?
- A usual wrong way: We need R&D to get out of the crisis.
- Bad answer that frustrates legitimate expectations!!!
 - When you get ill a healthy diet is not the solution. Medical treatment is needed
 - A healthy diet is to keep you in good shape
- We need an R&D and innovation smart strategy because
 - We have to build today the fundamental of the economy of tomorrow,
 - In order to give better options to our youth (stop the brain drain!!!)...
...and to ourselves (how'll our retirement be paid?)



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Smart specialization needs public involvement

- Most politicians will verbally support R&D&i strategies
 - But very few will be willing to pay the cost of opportunity they entail
- A humble message for policymakers (and for all of us)
 - Politics drives policies at the regional level
 - Politics is mostly short-term
 - R&D and innovation strategies are long-term
 - Governments are under harsh pressure to keep public services running
 - On hard financial times focus on organization (innovation is needed here too) rather than budget (scarce budget availability will have other priorities)
 - Of paramount importance: social support is needed. Outreach activities will allow the People know and demand R&D&i policies
 - Public engagement is needed to involve the main stakeholders (public and private). Underperforming regions have low private share in R&D.



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Smart Specialization Strategies (RIS3)

- A good idea: promote common sense through informed discussion
- Be who you are: Know yourself and maximize your options
 1. Make a thorough analysis of your region situation and realistic possibilities
 2. Start by setting a participative governance structure
 3. Reach a realistic yet ambitious shared vision for the mean term

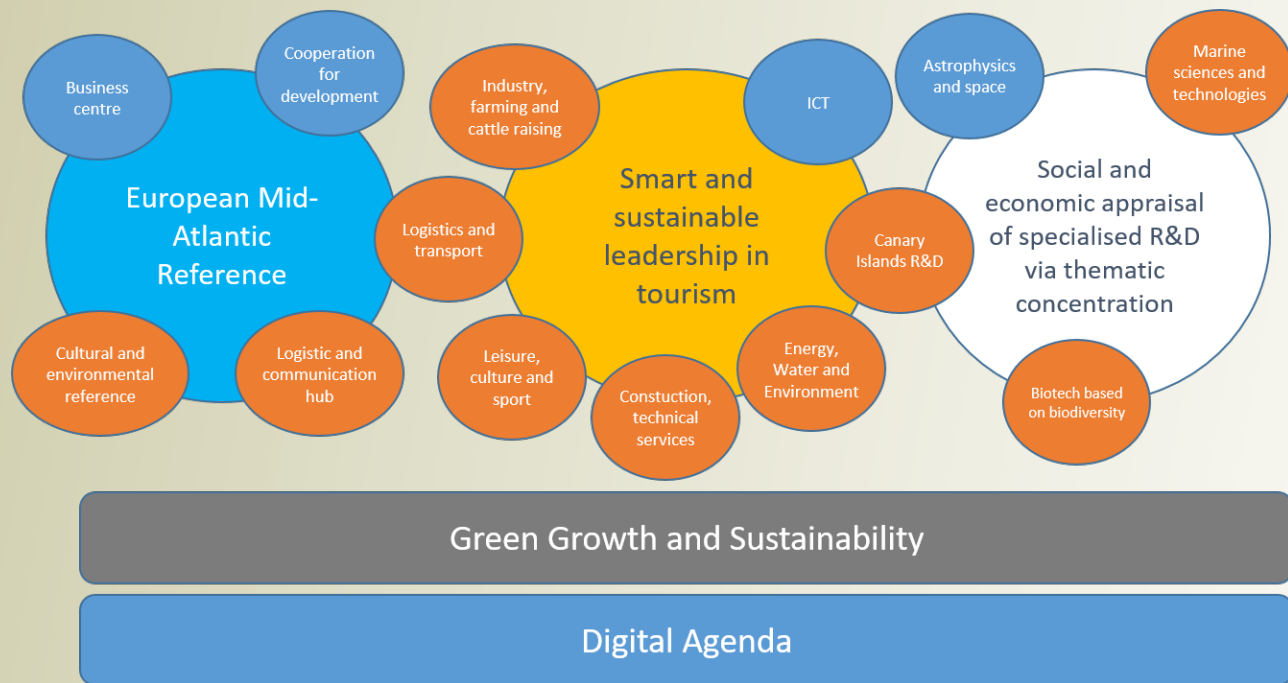
In 2012/13 the question was: How do we see ourselves by 2020 if we make it right?
 4. Focus on a short set of priorities based on your differential potentials: Be humble, acknowledge your region cannot compete successfully in everything

NOT EASY: every stakeholder wants to be pictured regardless any other consideration.
Key hint: leverage every available capacity for well defined targets of regional interest
 5. Discover the most appropriate policy instruments for the stakeholders
 6. Quality assurance: monitor, assess and correct



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Our small set of RIS3 priorities: 3+2 =5



RIS3 of the Canary Islands 2014-2020



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Canary Islands: opportunities

- Leverage assets and turn weaknesses into strengths
 - Outermost regions are far away, and consist of fragmented territories
 - But they have been identified as the outposts of the EU in the World
 - Canary Islands: tri-continental Atlantic hub with logistic advantages for cooperation with West Africa and Latin America
 - Logistic Centre for Humanitarian Aid of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
 - Logistic Centre of the United Nations Food Programme
 - Casa África: a main instrument of the Spanish public diplomacy
 - They have unique natural environments
 - Canary Islands: sea, biodiversity, weather, accessible height & clear skies,...
 - Tourism is an asset for the Canary Islands
 - Millions of visitors provide opportunity for diffusion & demonstrative living labs
 - According to the Treaties EU Law can be modulated to help them out
 - Canary Islands: Specific Fiscal & Economic Regime, with general low taxation and extra-low taxation in certain areas and sectors (4% corporate tax, Zona Especial Canaria)

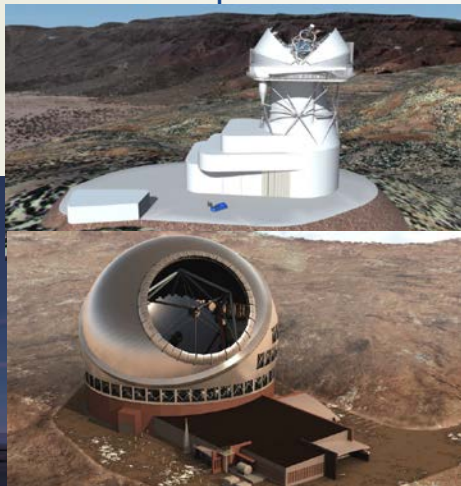
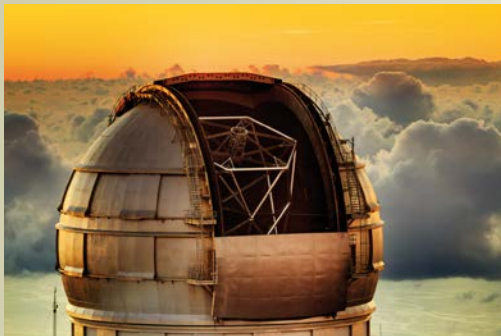


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Leveraging natural assets: astronomy

- Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC)
 - Two World-class international observatories: Roque Muchachos & Teide
 - Some of the most powerful telescopes already installed or planned
 - Technology transfer to astrophysics, space & medical industries: a great opportunity for the regional knowledge-based economy



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UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)



Health services & education

- A great success: Medical School at the **University of Zambeze** (Mozambique), developed in cooperation by the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Prof. Luis López & colleagues)
 - It's a joint program: African students and Canarian professors come together both in Mozambique and in Gran Canaria
- INTERREG MACbiolDi project to adapt technology for cooperation for medical services and education in developing countries (Mauritania, Senegal, Cape Verde)
 - Wide consortium, including industry and international institutions (eg Harvard Medical School)

Sustainable blue economy

- Acuiculture for a growing population – R&D at ULPGC

Sustainable tourism economy

- Already sharing the experience of the Canary Islands in Africa

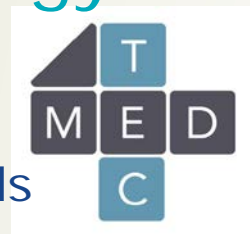
Sustainable energy & water supply

- ITC & ULPGC



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Building a EU international technology hub for sustainable development



- Inspired by the current **RIS3** of the Canary Islands
- Provide a proof-of-concept to implement some of its ideas
 - Medical Technology for sustainable development: 3 SDGs are addressed
- High-tech for the needs of the World -> Cost and education
 - New business models, with liberal IP schemes
- Initial funding from EU Interreg MAC programme
- Involving partners in every eligible territory: Canary Islands, Azores, Madeira, Cape Verde, Senegal
 - Easily extensible to other developing countries. Eg. Mozambique
- With the contribution of EU and American public and private organizations (eg. Harvard University) and a genuine interest from some large companies



We have already started to make it happen!!!



Building a EU international technology hub for sustainable development

Let's make it happen!!!

Thank you very much
<http://medtec4susdev.org>

