

## Smart Stories: S3 from Design to Implementation

Smart specialisation in the current socio-economic context angle

# Smart specialisation and Austria's Lead Institutions Initiative at public universities

by Armin Mahr

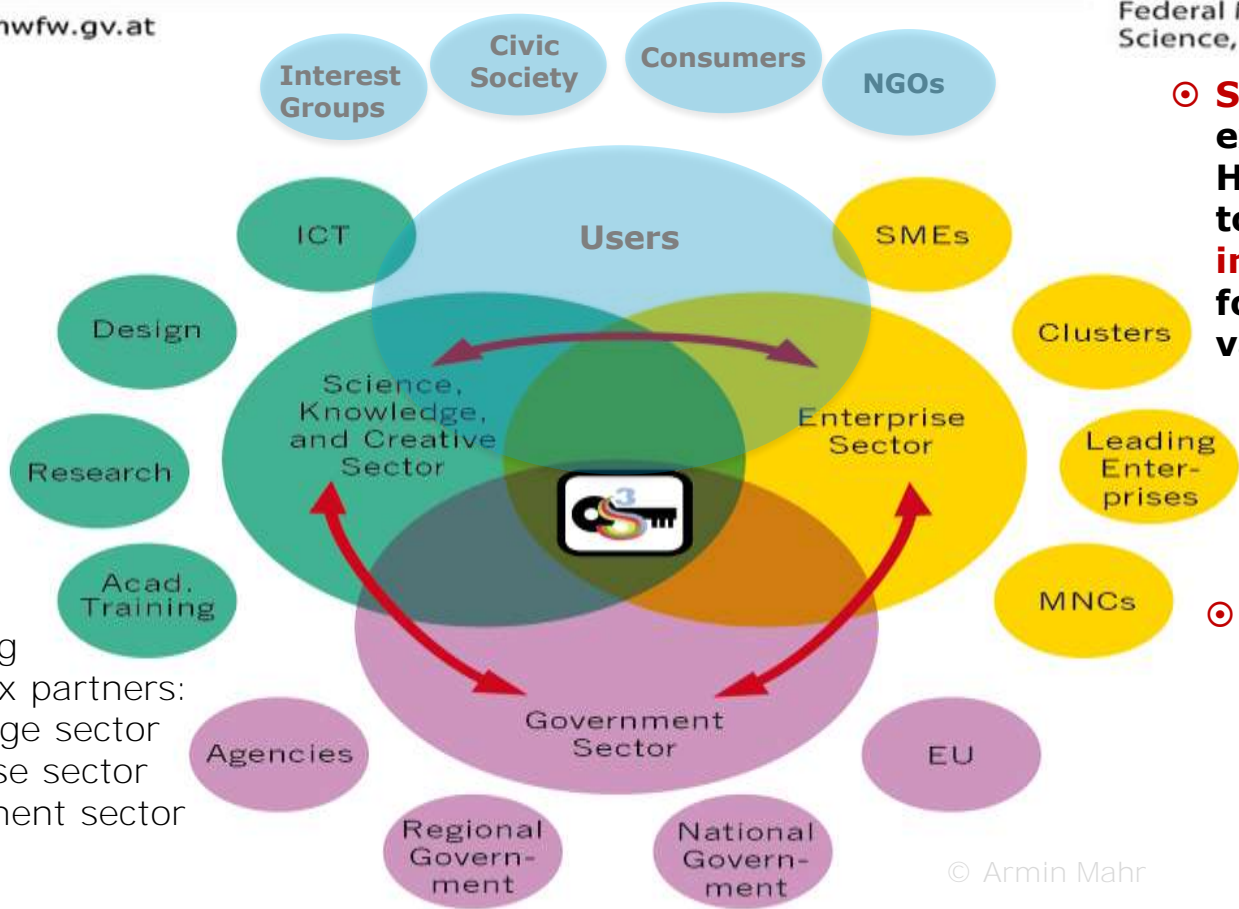
MACRO-REGIONAL INNOVATION WEEK: At the crossroads of three European Macro-Regions: Danube, Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine Regions, Trieste, 27 September 2016

[www.bmwf.wg.v.at](http://www.bmwf.wg.v.at)

- Early partner of European Commission/JRC's S3 Platform
- Together with Flanders, Finland: initiator of OECD smart specialisation project >
- **RIS3 KEY** brochure as an easy starting and self-assessment tool: download from [www.era.gv.at/regions](http://www.era.gv.at/regions) in 7 languages!
- Ex-ante conditionality (EAC) met with a strategic framework around the Austrian government RTI strategy
- STI strategies in all regions, some showcases, overall growing role of S3
- Autumn 2016: Strat.AT partnership ,**Smart Specialisation`**: new publication of national/regional specialisations
- Outlook: Growing regional sensitivity, growing national/regional alignment
- Resume: EAC did not suit Austria, need for a diversified approach, no quick shot, but **long term commitment to Smart Specialisation**

# Place-based references: Smart Specialisation

www.bmwf.w.at



⊙ **Story:** Mobilising the expertise of all Helix partners helps to set the right **public investment priorities** for regional innovation ecosystem.

- ⊙ Connecting Triple Helix partners:
- Knowledge sector
  - Enterprise sector
  - Government sector

- ⊙ Mobilising a Quadruple Helix:
- Knowledge sector
  - Enterprise sector
  - Government sector
  - Users / Civil society

Knowledge and HEI are established to last: Less affected by changing economic rationales or business cycle fluctuations, they create persistent values within a region.

## **Knowledge institutions rarely move their headquarters and research units.**

- ◉ (Specific regional) knowledge output, higher education, key partners for enterprises and business sector > enhancing regional innovation potential, high-profile developers of skills and talents, positive image of the region etc.
- ◉ Social and demographic effects: access to higher education, social mix, attractiveness of the region for young people, anchors of social innovation
- ◉ Direct and indirect economic effects: Employment, income, (inter)national investments and spillovers, employees' and student's expenses
- ◉ Knowledge is cutting across borders by nature: HEI infuse regional innovation systems with international knowledge and technologies. They are international co-operation hubs for their region and help to bridge existing social, cultural and economic gaps in Europe.
- ◉ **Smart Specialisation: Higher education institutions (HEI)** need to engage proactively as **experts on the regional knowledge capital & frontier** and realise their **role as regional *Lead Institutions***, on equal terms with *regional policy makers* and the *branch leading companies*, as partners in shaping regional innovation ecosystems.

# The *Lead Institutions Initiative* at Austrian universities (1)

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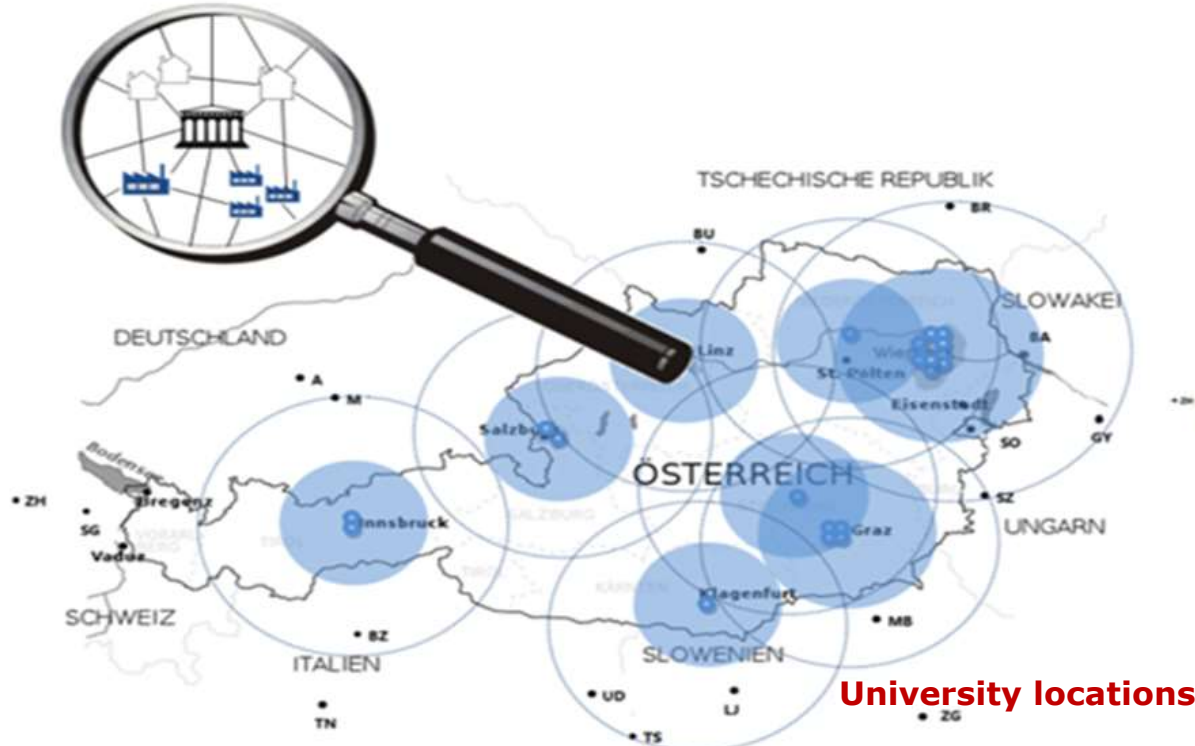
## **Rationales:**

- ⊙ Connecting universities with & in their regions
- ⊙ Developing competitive knowledge places with an international profile
- ⊙ Empowerment of strategic capacity as international co-operation hubs
- ⊙ Creating synergies through co-ordination  
(thematic/location related approaches)
- ⊙ Planning shift from a mere institutional to a location perspective

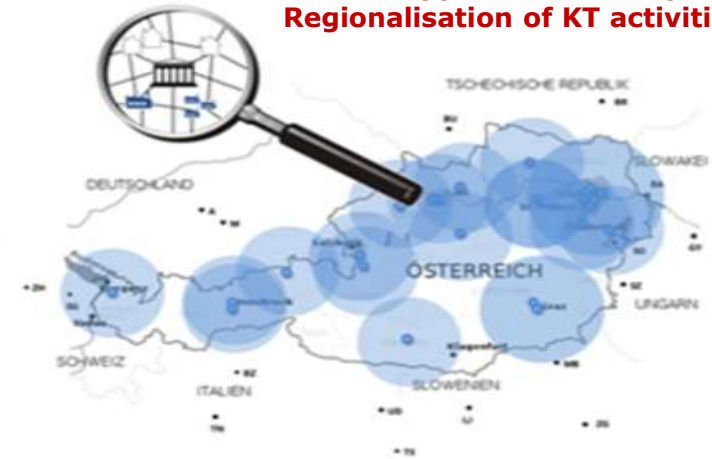
# HEI locations in Austria: Developing competitive knowledge places

[www.bmwf.gv.at](http://www.bmwf.gv.at)

- Proximity (still) matters.
- Connecting regionalisation & internationalisation



**Universities of Applied Sciences (FH):  
Regionalisation of KT activities**



# The Lead Institutions Initiative at Austrian universities (2)

**Instruments:** Performance agreements & Austrian Universities Development Plan 2016-21

*“A location concept (‘Standortkonzept’) is a university’s bridge from local engagement to global competitiveness.”*

PA 2013-15: Towards regional awareness

- **Location concepts** (connected with or part of the university’s development plan)
- Active contribution to the regional innovation strategy (RIS3)

*“In a location concept universities highlight their position within a network of strategic partners in academia, industry and business in a self-chosen surrounding area of close collaboration.”*

PA 2016-18: Towards regional alignment and communication

- Location concept update / integration in development plan
- Using regional HEI platforms to develop joint location concepts
- Using the concept to communicate a regional knowledge profile

*“Presenting themselves as a clustered habitat or critical mass of excellence rather than a single institution should support them to attract global cooperations and investments.”*

PA 2019-21: Towards place-based investment

- Aligning public investment: Intention to base infrastructure and thematic focus investments on co-ordinated place-based location support and supply

# The *Lead Institutions Initiative* at Austrian universities (2)

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**Instruments:** Performance agreements & Austrian Universities Development Plan 2016-21

## PA 2013-15: **Towards regional awareness**

- Location concepts (connected with or part of the **university's** development plan)
- Active contribution to the regional innovation strategy (RIS3)

## PA 2016-18: **Towards regional alignment and communication**

- Location concept update / integration in development plans
- Using regional HEI platforms to develop joint location concepts, reaching out to universities of applied sciences
- Using the concept to communicate a regional knowledge profile

## PA 2019-21: **Towards place-based investment**

- Aligning public investment: Intention to base infrastructure and thematic focus investments on co-ordinated place-based location concepts developed by HEI

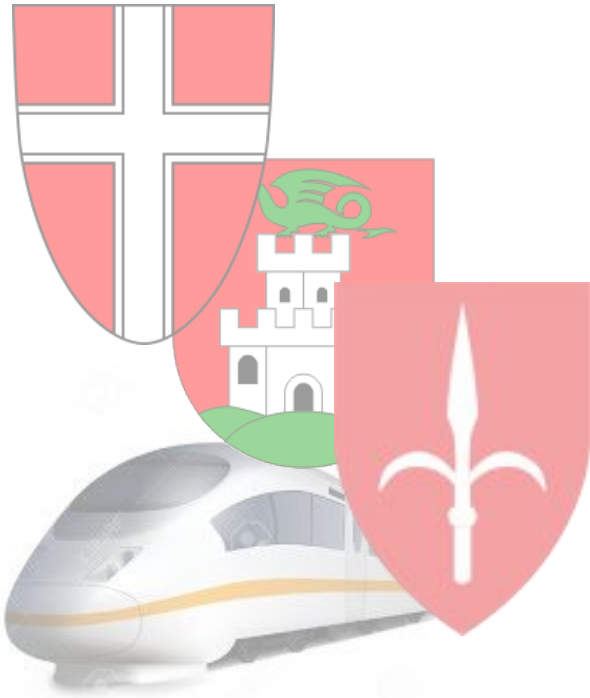


# Thank you for your attention.

Grazie per l'attenzione | Hvala za vašo pozornost

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Armin Mahr

Head of Strategy Unit, STI Locations and Regional Policies  
Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy  
Minoritenplatz 5, 1010 Vienna, Austria

**[armin.mahr@bmwfw.gv.at](mailto:armin.mahr@bmwfw.gv.at)**

+43 1 53120-9120