



***Special Session (SS25) on:***

***Smart Specialisation as a place-based policy for SDGs: open questions and emerging evidence***

**Organizers:**

**Carlo Gianelle** - European Commission, Joint Research Centre, E-mail: [Carlo.GIANELLE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Carlo.GIANELLE@ec.europa.eu)

**Katerina Ciampi Stancova** - European Commission, Joint Research Centre, E-mail: [Katerina.CIAMPI-STANCOVA@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Katerina.CIAMPI-STANCOVA@ec.europa.eu)

**The aim and scope:**

The 2030 Agenda of the United Nations, adopted in September 2015, put forward the idea that Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) are among the key means to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, the European experience with the Smart Specialisation policy is increasingly recognised worldwide as a suitable STI-driven approach for the achievement of sustainable development objectives, with a distinctive emphasis on the territorial, local and place-based needs. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in adopting Smart Specialisation as a reference approach to localised innovation-led transformation in a number of countries across the globe, as well as an increasing focus on SDGs as key framework for setting targets and ambitions. Notwithstanding this momentum, there are still a number of open questions in relation to the capacity of place-based innovation policies to address societal challenges and meet SDGs goals. For instance, can we expect territorial policies and place-based innovation to deliver on broad societal challenges, by providing solutions to those needs that are locally relevant? What are the implications of this shift towards more place-based policy tools and instruments? How can these place-based policies be developed, monitored and evaluated in order to feed the policy cycle of singular territories and at the same time the global sustainable development in general? This session aims at presenting a set of conceptual reflections and emerging empirical evidence in response to such questions, helping to better define the role of place-based policies in the achievement of SDGs and of Smart Specialisation in particular.

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