

# Wallonia's Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) 2021-2027

March 2021





## Presentation plan

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1. Context
2. Methodology
3. Vision et ambitions
4. Strategic Innovation Areas
5. Key Principles for Implementation
6. Governance
7. Next steps



# 1. Context

**S3=**  
**S**mart  
**S**pecialisation  
**S**trategy





# Definition

The S3 is an **integrated, region-specific economic transformation strategy** that:

- Is based on the strengths, competitive advantages and potentials of each region;
- Targets **priorities**, challenges, and key needs to concentrate available resources: having a strategy means making investment choices;
- Defines priorities through an inclusive process: the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP);
- Effectively integrates public tools and policies, supporting technological innovation as non-technological innovation and aimed at stimulating private sector investment;
- Includes a monitoring and evaluation system and a review mechanism to update policy choices.



# Why do we need a S3?



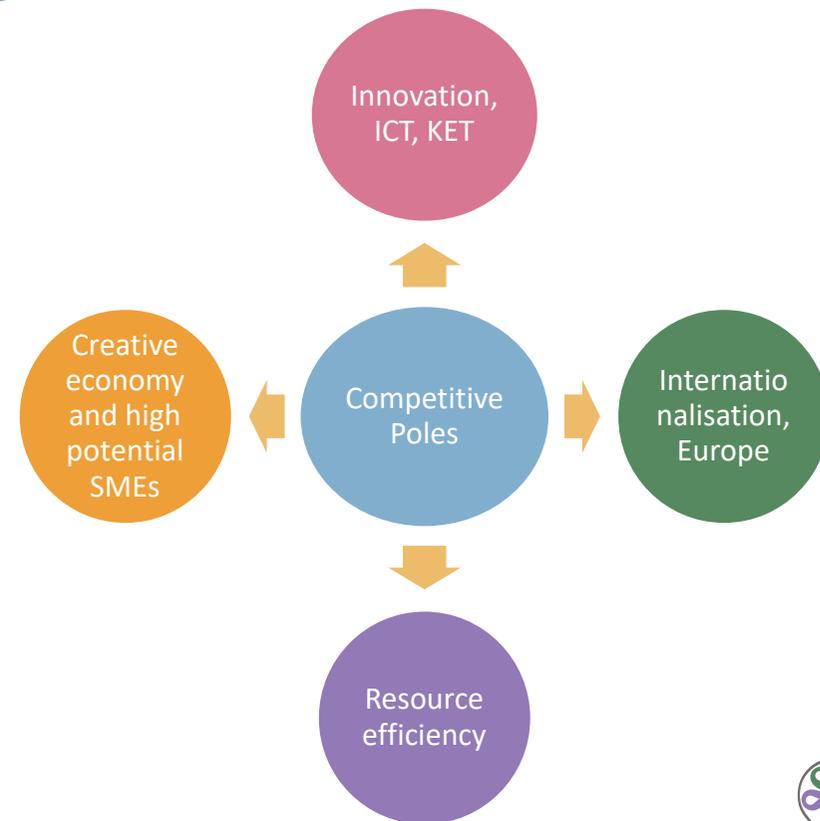
Enabling condition for European Structural Funds Programming (2021-2027) – Strategic Objective 1: A smarter Europe  
*To be observed continuously*

The S3 is the **strategic framework** for **Research and innovation policy and industrial policy** in Wallonia. Priority of the Walloon Government (Government Agreement)

⇒ Opportunity to improve the effectiveness of regional innovation policies by addressing major societal challenges in Wallonia

## Reminder :2014-2020 programming

- Ex ante conditionality/Innovation axis 2: Smart Specialisation Strategy adopted
- Walloon Government's Decision September 2015 on its S3
- Incremental approach based on pre-existing policies



# Conditionality criteria S3 2021-2027

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= Compliance obligation for the EC

-  Analysis of challenges, including barriers to the dissemination of innovation
-  Existence of a competent regional body responsible for the management of S3
-  Monitoring and evaluation tools to measure performance regarding strategy objectives
-  Functioning of Stakeholder Cooperation (EDP)
-  Actions taken to improve the regional innovation system (link to EU Semester)
-  Actions to support industrial transition
-  Measures for internationalisation



## 2. Methodology

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# S3 Working Group

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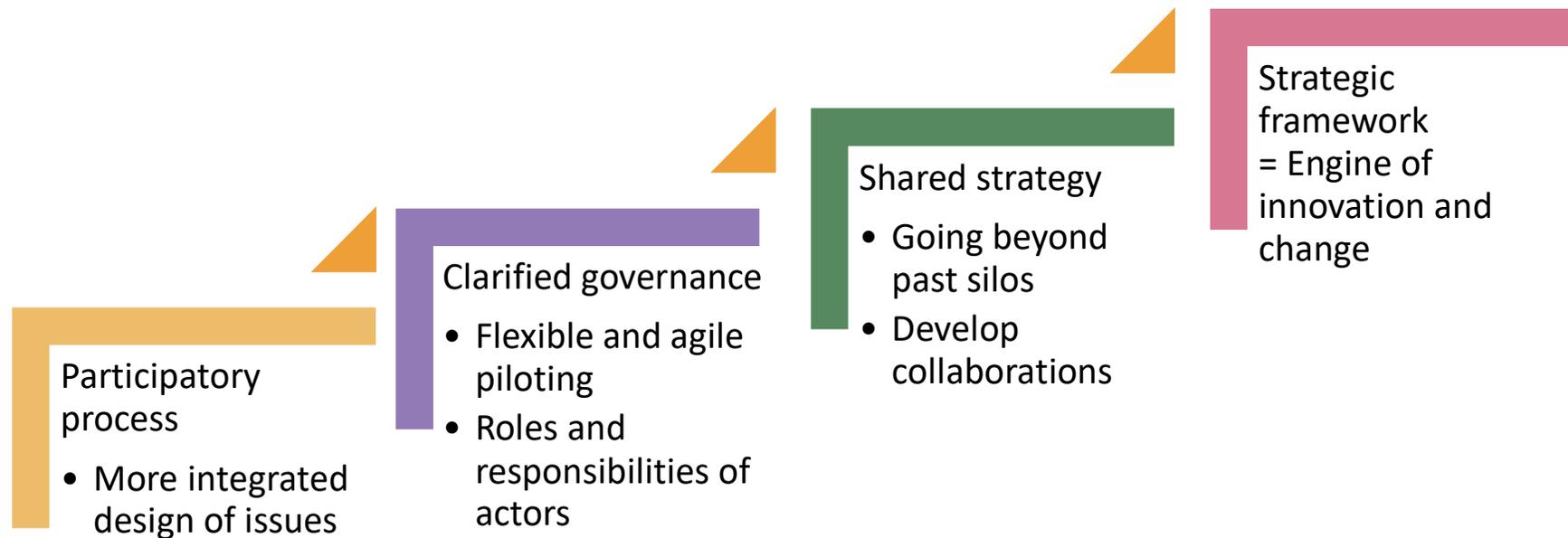
Steering the S3 renewal process

Composed by :

- Office of the Minister of Economy, Innovation and Research
- SPW Economy, Employment, Research (Directorate of Economic Policy + Department of Research and Technological Development)
- Sowalfin (Innovation Agency)
- Agence du Numérique (Digital Agency )
- SPW General Secretariat (Structural Funds Coordination Department)
- Methodological support from external advisors : Idea Consult, Claire Nauwelaers, Alasdair Reid



# Principles of the approach



# Renewal of the Walloon #S3

## Step by step



February 2020  
Participatory  
seminar

July 2020  
**Innovation  
Camp**

Ongoing dialogue:  
**linkedin page**



**October 2020  
Decision of the  
Government on  
the 5 Strategic  
Innovation  
Areas (SIA)**



November 2020  
Policy-mix  
5 Workshops per  
SIA  
+ 1 transversal  
workshop



**March 2021  
Adoption of the  
Walloon S3 by the  
Government**



**S3 implementation**  
Pursuit of a  
partnership and inclusive  
approach

# Involvement of the stakeholders: Quadruple helix

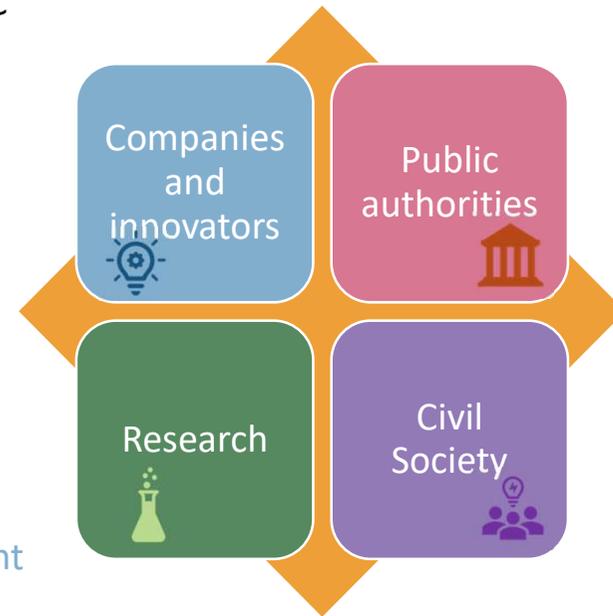
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- ✓ 12th December 2019 : Inspirational seminar on S3 (with EC and EU experts): 40 participants
- ✓ 14th February 2020 : participatory seminar : 100 participants
- ✓ 9-10th July 2020: Innovation Camp: 140 participants in 6 sessions
- ✓ 15th July 2020: debriefing and pooling
- ✓ November 2020 : Workshops dedicated to the policy-mix : 15 participants \*5 thematic sessions + 35 participants horizontal session

## Ongoing dialogue and co-construction approach

The collaborative approach based on stakeholder engagement will be continued for implementation (2021-2027)

= Continuous Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP)





### 3. Vision and ambitions

*An innovative, competitive and collaborative Wallonia, serving affirmed economic and societal ambitions*

# Ambitions

Setting up innovative ecosystems around stated strategic priorities, based on Wallonia's distinctive strengths

Strengthening the dynamics of collaboration within the regional ecosystem

**Concentration of resources** and joint efforts of regional actors on a limited number of **priorities**, with a strong ambition

Translating these priorities into roadmaps shared by stakeholders

Attraction, strengthening and maintenance of a skilled workforce in the Walloon region

**Enhanced effectiveness** of regional economic and innovation policy arrangements

**Clarified governance**, based on principles of collaboration and inclusion

Strengthening Wallonia's international **competitiveness and attractiveness** and generating significant economic and societal impacts





# 4. Strategic Innovation Areas (SIA)



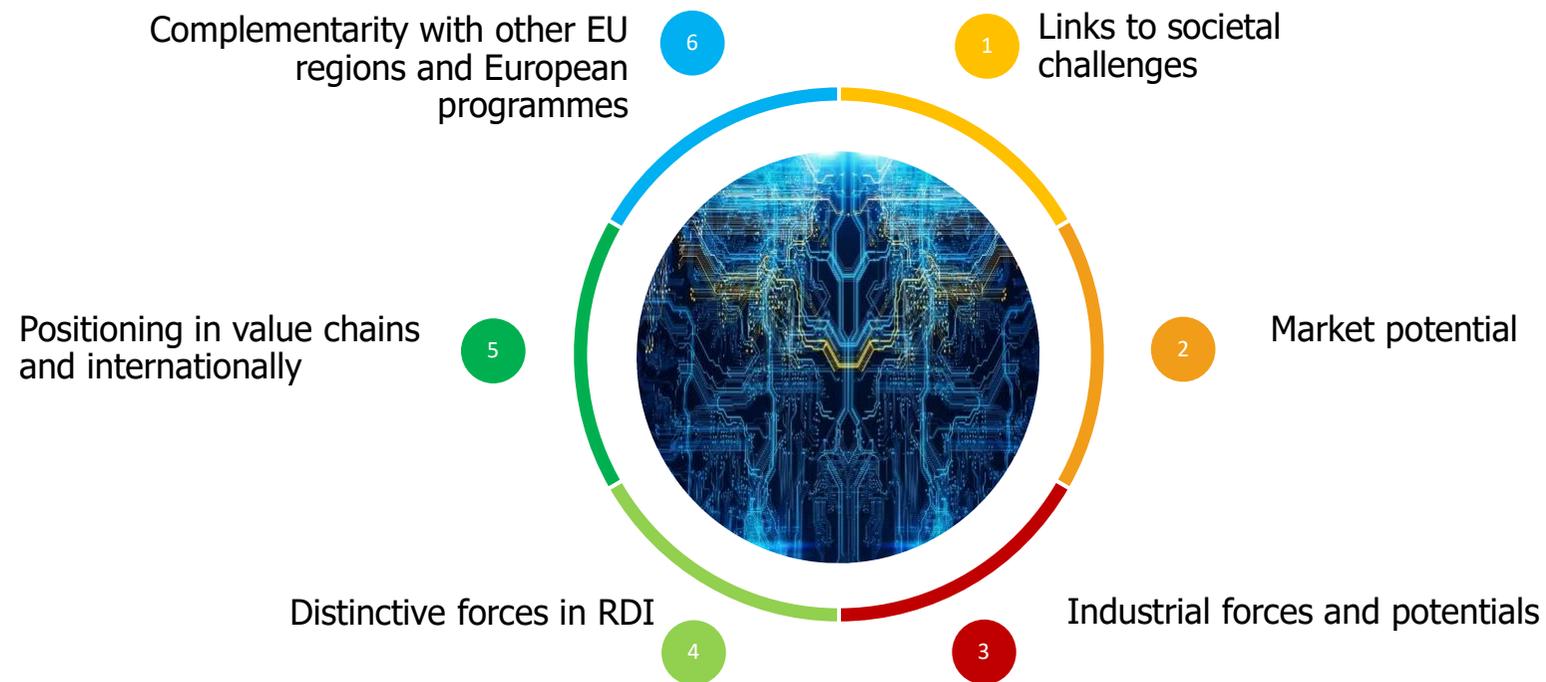
## What is a Strategic Innovation Area (SIA)?

- ✦ A SIA is a coherent and ambitious set of innovative activities, of regional scope, with strong economic impact and societal contribution, capitalising on a combination of Walloon resources and distinctive strengths and centered on the human.
- ✦ A SIA contributes to both strengthening the economy and employment, and responding to societal challenges. It positions Wallonia as an international leader.

*This definition was agreed with the actors on the ground.*

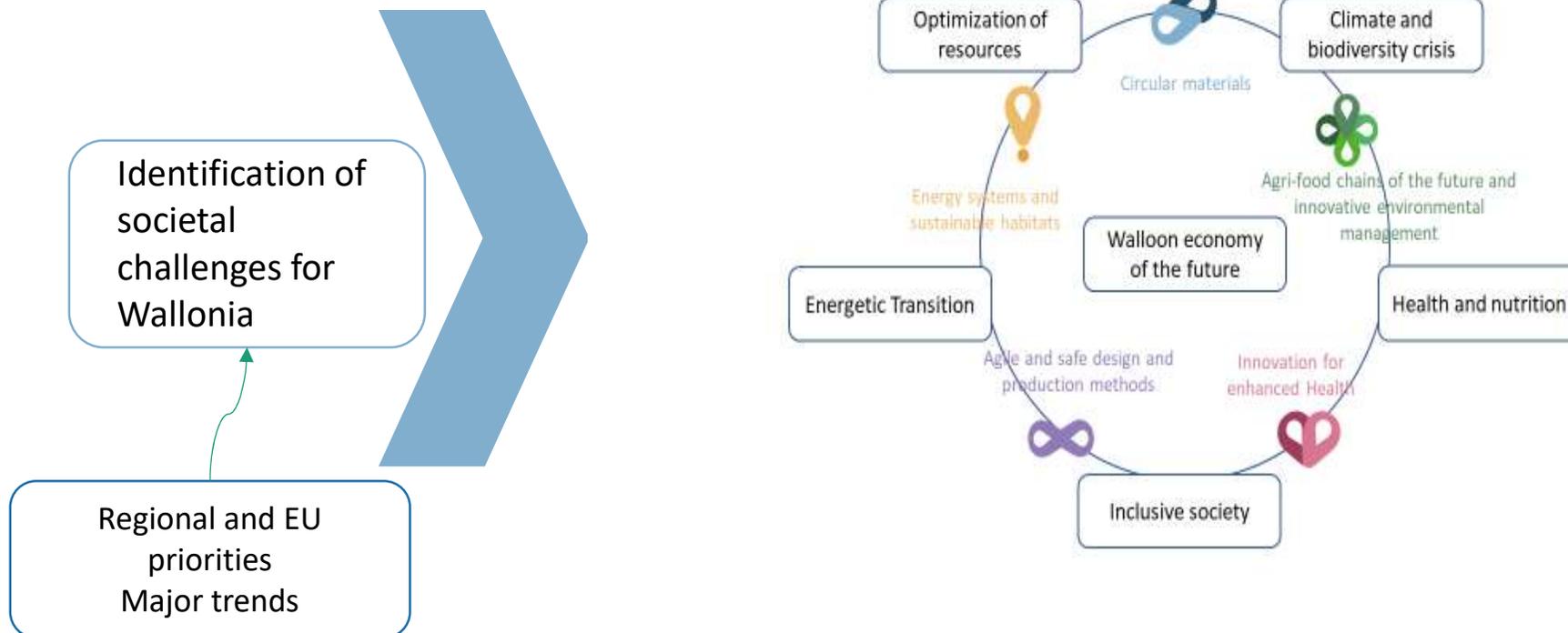


# On the basis of what criteria were SIAs selected?



# The 5 SIAs validated by the Government

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These 5 Walloon SIAs are inspiring areas with a **strong potential impact on the Walloon economy and the lives of citizens.**

They therefore aim to contribute to a resilient and regenerative territory and respond to the major societal challenges that Wallonia «post-COVID» encounters.

Objective: to develop a coherent set of activities within them while maximizing cross-fertilization between fields, technologies, disciplines and actors.



## SIA – Circular Materials



*#Circular materials*  
*#Ecodesign #Industrial Symbiosis*  
*# Re-employment and repair #Recycling*  
*#Logistics*

It brings together innovative activities related to the “circularization” of materials, with a view to reducing resource consumption, increasing regional autonomy and developing new market opportunities. These activities are based on the regional technological expertise in materials processing as well as the presence of recoverable natural resources.

Circular materials are **inert or biosourced materials** that can be processed at different stages to ensure their future waste status is time-shifted or completely avoided.

- Ecodesign and in particular with second generation materials
- Industrial symbiosis
- The stimulation of the economy of re-employment, of the repair of these materials by mobilizing the actors of the social economy
- Innovation in the recycling of these materials through new technologies, but also other forms of organisation or financing.
- An innovative approach to logistics, particularly through reverse logistics and the physical internet, is a lever of transversal support to all these activities.



## SIA - Innovations for enhanced health



*#Biotherapy  
#Biopharmacy #Medical  
Technologies  
#Radiotherapy #Health  
system #Preventive health  
#Curative health #Health  
electronic #Mobile health  
#Silver economy*

- Evolution towards a health system that is both cutting-edge and inclusive, implemented through innovations based on technology in interaction with humans.
- An ambitious and coherent set of innovative activities of a technological, organisational and social nature to ensure the **transformation of the health system** in the broad sense, in its **preventive, diagnostic** and **curative** missions.
- To strengthen Wallonia's distinctive strengths as an international leader in biotech and medical technologies, and to respond to the challenge of preserving health capital for all citizens in the context of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Development of new products and solutions for growing markets: home health; e-Health (electronic health) and m-Health (mobile-health).



# SIA - Innovations for agile and safe design and production methods

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*# Industry of the future  
Advanced manufacturing  
technologies  
#Advanced materials  
#Intelligent functional  
materials #Bio-inspired  
materials  
#IoT #AI #Cybersecurity  
#Digital simulation #Design  
and simulation tools*

- The reindustrialisation of the economy and the modernisation of industry in the broad sense have been one of the major priorities of governments at European and Walloon regional levels for some years.
- Innovative activities related to **Industry 4.0** and **advanced manufacturing** processes, development of **digital technologies** for the modernization of production tools, development and integration of **advanced or composite materials**, and **additive technologies**.
- It is based on Wallonia's distinctive skills in areas such as advanced manufacturing (among other additive) and advanced materials, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence as well as design and simulation tools for the design of new inserts, motors and structural parts.



# SIA - Energy Systems and Sustainable Housing

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*#Energy Efficiency in  
Buildings and Industry  
#Renewable Energy  
#Energy Storage and  
Distribution #Design and  
Simulation of Energy-  
Efficient  
Parts/Systems/Componen  
ts #Low-Carbon  
Mobility #Green  
Chemistry #Eco-  
Sustainable Construction*

- This SIA includes new solutions for green energy transition and future housing.
- This SIA will be based mainly on the distinct strengths and innovative activities of Wallonia in the engineering, design and simulation of more **energy-efficient systems** and parts, **energy storage** and integrated management of **energy production and consumption flows** within industrial production, buildings and integrated communities ('**smart grids**'), integrated **traffic flow and network** management, innovative solutions for improving the energy efficiency of buildings, specifically **new insulating materials and/or energy sensors**, digital solutions related to **security, modelling, simulation and monitoring of energy consumption and performance of buildings**, as well as skills in biomass valorization.



# SIA - Agri-food chains of the future and innovative environmental management

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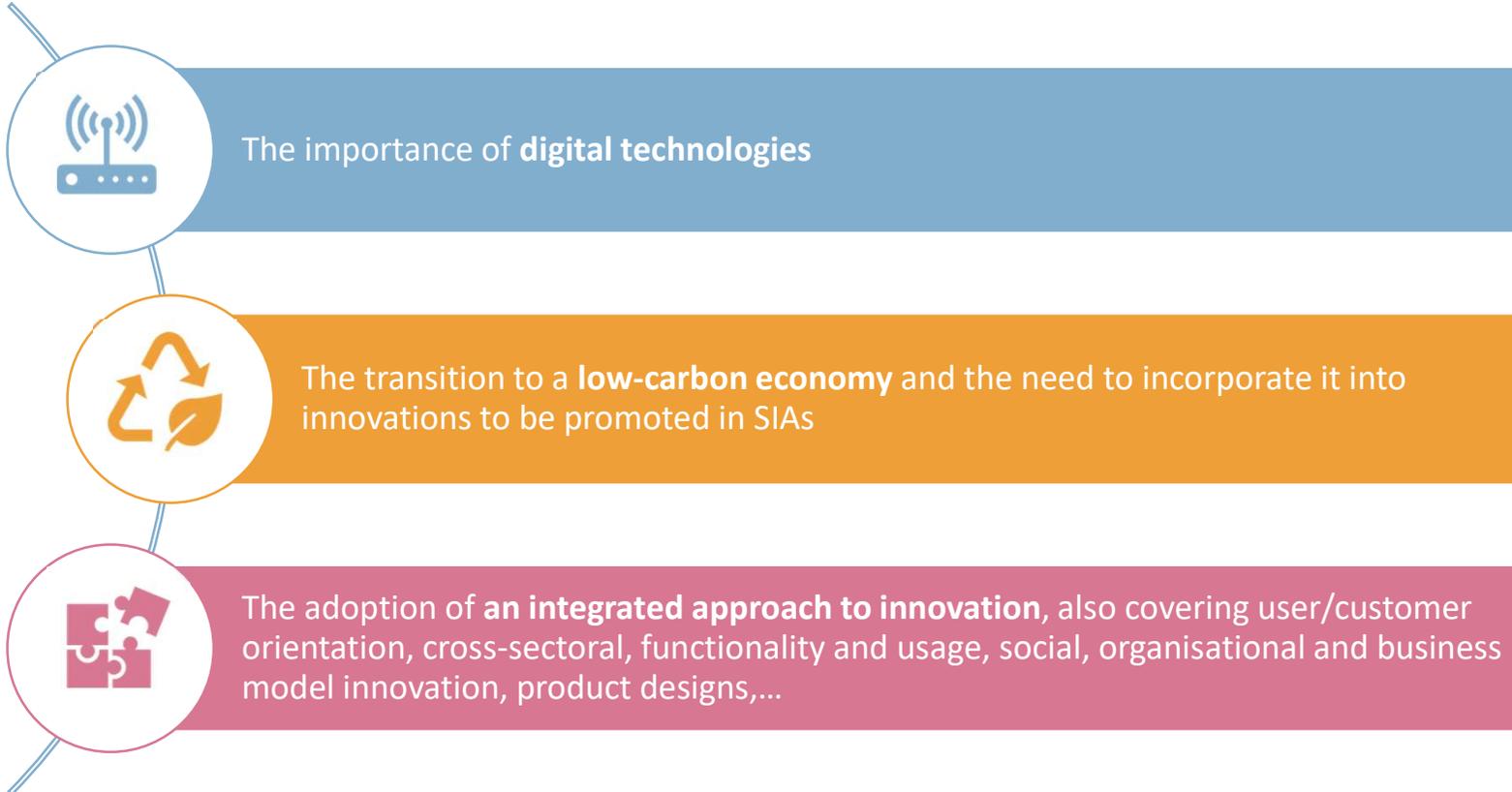
*Healthy Food – Food Quality –  
Food Safety – Food Systems –  
Logistics – Nutritional and  
Functional Ingredients –  
Industrial Biotechnology –  
Technologies for Environmental  
Health – Monitoring  
Environment - Water Cycle - Soil  
Restoration*

- Innovative activities to support the emergence of high value-added and market potential products and services within a sustainable and circular agro-food system.
- Wallonia's current strengths in research and innovation in the agri-food sector are focused on: **food quality and safety; sustainable and circular agri-food systems; nutritional and functional ingredients; and industrial biotechnologies (white biotechnologies).**
- In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of natural ecosystems (soil health and water cycle), the Walloon potential in the field of environmental ecosystem and **biodiversity monitoring services, agroecology and sustainable agricultural/forestry innovation will be strengthened.**



# Transversal dimensions

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## 4. Key Principles for Implementation

*A single leitmotif: efficiency and  
impact!*

- ✓ Reforms of support arrangements
- ✓ Reviewed governance
- ✓ Strengthening alignment and coordination between instruments and actors



# Implementation of SIAs

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## Co-constructed Roadmaps

= Main reference for the selection of projects and the concentration of resources dedicated to SIAs.



# 9 guiding principles for the policy mix

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# Reform projects

**Reform of research aid to rationalise and simplify schemes**



**Reform of the economic support and innovation landscape** for SMEs to ensure quality support for Walloon entrepreneurs



Adaptation of the **Competitive Poles and Cluster Policy** in connection with the new S3



Capitalisation on ongoing **training policy reforms**



Stronger focus on **international actions**





Link between S3 and European policies:  
A clearly identified need

- Conditionality criteria
- Evaluation elements
- Demand from actors

International positioning

- Contribution to EU objectives
- External markets

Development of Walloon specialisation areas

- Collaborations and networks
- Search for complementarities

Further activate EU levers, in synergy with regional tools

- Prioritisation
- Improved governance and policy mix
- Structure





## S3 INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

### SUPPORT ACTION TO INTERNATIONALISATION (AWEX - WBI)

Alignment with S3 and support to SIA roadmaps

### EUROPEAN POSITIONING STRATEGY

Reforms ongoing in the Public Service of Wallonia + SOWALFIN

Wallonia Inside EU

NCP, EEN

### COLLABORATIONS AND NETWORKS

Vanguard Initiative

S3 Thematic Platforms, I3

Interreg

### EU PROGRAMMES

Horizon Europe

Digital Europe (e-DIHs)

Single Market Programme - Euroclusters

...

Industrial Strategy

Industrial Alliances and Ecosystems

IPCEI

*International aspects integrated in the SIA roadmaps*

Strong connections with other strategies



# 5. Governance

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## Governance

Integrated

Open

Lasting

Continuous EDP

Strategic

Intelligent tracking

Transparent

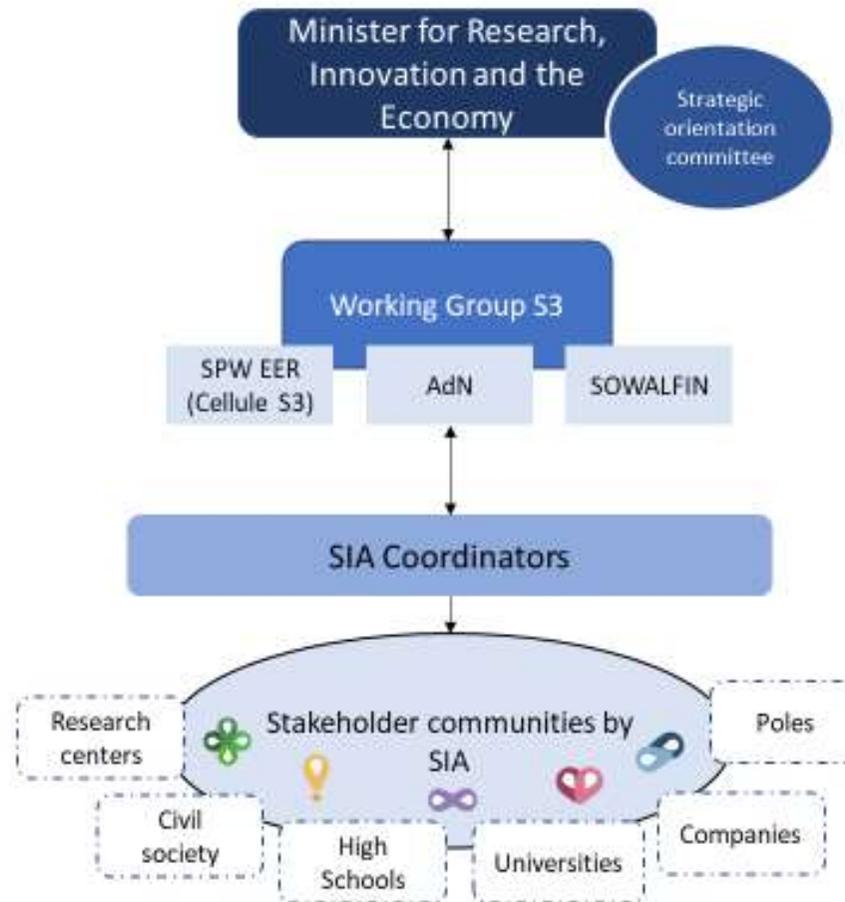
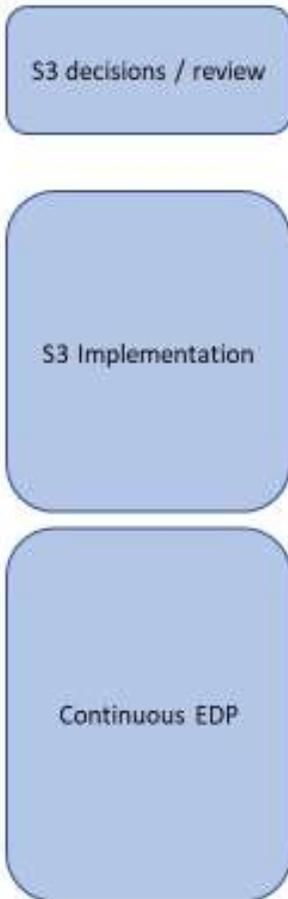


# Governance principles

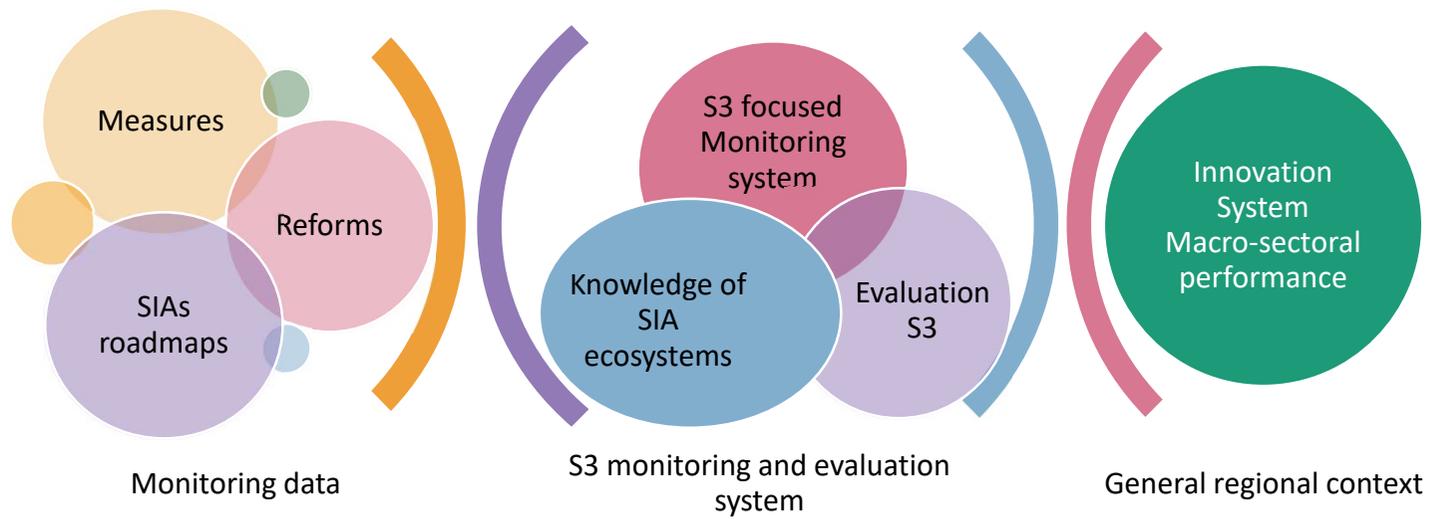
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- 1 Sustainable, continuous and integrated governance, with three levels interacting – strategic, operational and participatory
- 2 Open governance that seeks synergies with Europe and other regions
- 3 Inclusive and collaborative governance through a continuous EDP to monitor SIAs
- 4 Strategic governance through a more pro-active role of public authorities
- 5 Smart governance through inclusion and strengthening strategic intelligence for decision tracking
- 6 Transparent governance through good communication on S3





# S3 monitoring and evaluation system





## 7. Next steps

## Pursuit of an inclusive and partnership approach



Adoption S3 by  
Government (March 2021)



Drafting of roadmaps  
Elaboration of the monitoring framework



Adoption of roadmaps  
(July 2021)



Start of implementation  
Calls  
Developing stakeholder communities



Thank you for your time!

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<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13874715/>

<https://economie.wallonie.be/content/smart-specialisation>

