

## **A multi-level governance model for green missions within regions: The case of the Basque Country**

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In the last years, the urgent need to address grand societal challenges has led to the emergence of new transformative innovation policy approaches. Among these, mission-oriented innovation policies (Mazzucato, 2018) have gained significant popularity among policymakers (OPSI, 2021). Despite its rapid diffusion, the concept remains fuzzy and still needs further research (Janssen et al, 2023a). This is particularly true at regional level, since this approach lacks the consideration of the role of places and geographies for transformative change (Coenen, et al., 2015; Coenen & Morgan, 2020).

Regional innovation policy approaches, for their part, have been widely shaped by the notion of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) in the last decade. Despite the experimental roots of S3, the wide adoption by European regions has shown some weaknesses, especially for coping with grand societal challenges (Aranguren et al., 2023; Benner, 2020; Hassink & Gong, 2019). In particular, they have focused on science and technology and have largely failed in facilitating broader forms of social innovation. In addition, entrepreneurial discovery processes, a singular governance approach of S3, have also failed to incorporate the voice of society, which is particularly important for addressing grand societal challenges. Therefore, the challenge for implementing a mission approach at regional level relies not only on giving directionality to existing regional innovation policies, but developing new governance models that facilitate this transformation, following a multi-actor, multi scalar perspective (Pontikakis et al., 2022, Serger et al., 2023).

However, the role of entrepreneurial state (Mazzucato, 2015) in regions can be performed by different governments at different territorial scales. This role depends on the development of several capacities (McCaan, 2023, Kivimaa & Morgan, 2023; Wazenbok et al, 2020) among which, we can highlight the capacity to coordinate across multilevel, actors and instruments, the capacity for legitimacy and leadership, the capacity of reflexivity, learning and experimenting and the capacity for managing conflicts (Janssen et al, 2023b). Following a multi scalar perspective same missions can be enacted differently in different local contexts (Brent et al, 2023) and governance contexts and structures are particularly relevant for shaping how regional innovation policies are designed and implemented (Janssen et al, 2023b, 2023c).

This paper focuses on the multilevel dimension of regional missions-oriented policies by exploring the role that regional governance approaches and institutional capacities play on defining and articulating missions. The paper argues that subsidiarity can naturally emerge and also be purposefully designed to articulate a multilevel regional approach that enables the mobilisation of regional resources, instruments and communities. The paper analyses the subsidiarity and governance mechanisms implemented for developing a green mobility initiative in the Basque Country region in Spain by the regional government and the mirror mission implemented at sub-regional level focused on new mobility, to learn about the relevance of institutional capacities on how the strategies are enacted in a multilevel regional context. The analysis puts the focus on how each of the missions has been framed and defined, the

stakeholders involved in their definition and implementation, the governance structures and mechanisms put in place for their development and how the multilevel approach has been integrated in each of them. The analysis will also deepen into the coordination mechanisms established between the two missions. It will then explore how the specific institutional capacities of each of the governments may have influenced their different ways of approaching a similar mission, and how this can be a means to mobilize a wider set of regional stakeholders and resources towards a place-based challenge. The case is analysed based on document analysis, interviews to relevant stakeholders and participant observation.