



Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2017

**Executive summary
EN version**

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This 8th edition of the Regional Innovation Scoreboard (RIS) provides a comparative assessment of performance of innovation systems across 220 regions of 22 EU Member States, Norway, Serbia, and Switzerland. In addition, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, and Malta are included at the country level, as in these countries, NUTS 1 and NUTS 2 levels are identical to the country territory.

The RIS accompanies the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS), which assesses performance of national innovation systems. Where the EIS provides an annual benchmark of the innovation performance of Member States, as well as other European countries and regional neighbours, regional innovation benchmarks are less frequent and less detailed due to a general lack of innovation data at the regional level. The Regional Innovation Scoreboard addresses this gap by providing statistical facts on regions' innovation performance. Compared to the EIS, the RIS has a stronger focus on the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Regional performance groups

Similar to the EIS, where countries are classified into four innovation performance groups, Europe's regions have been classified into regional Innovation Leaders (53 regions), regional Strong Innovators (60 regions), regional Moderate Innovators (85 regions), and regional Modest Innovators (22 regions). A more detailed breakdown of these performance groups is obtained by splitting each group into a top one-third (assigned with a '+'), middle one-third, and bottom one-third (assigned with a '-') regions. The most innovative regions will be Innovation Leaders +, and the least innovative regions will be Modest - Innovators. Only one country has regions in more than two different performance groups, although 12 countries have regions in four or more different performance sub-groups, as shown in the map below.

The most innovative regions are typically in the most innovative countries

The Innovation Leaders perform best on all indicators, in particular on those indicators measuring the performance of their research system (scientific publications) and business innovation (shares of innovative enterprises). Most of the Regional Innovation Leaders are located in countries identified as Innovation Leaders in the European Innovation Scoreboard, and almost all of the Regional Moderate and Modest Innovators are located in countries identified as Moderate and Modest Innovators. However, regional 'pockets of excellence' can be identified in some Moderate Innovator countries (for instance, *Praha (Prague)* in the Czech Republic, *Bratislavský kraj* in Slovakia, and *País Vasco (Basque Country)* in Spain), while some regions in Innovation Leader and Strong Innovator countries lag behind.

Rank results revealed: Stockholm most innovative region in the EU

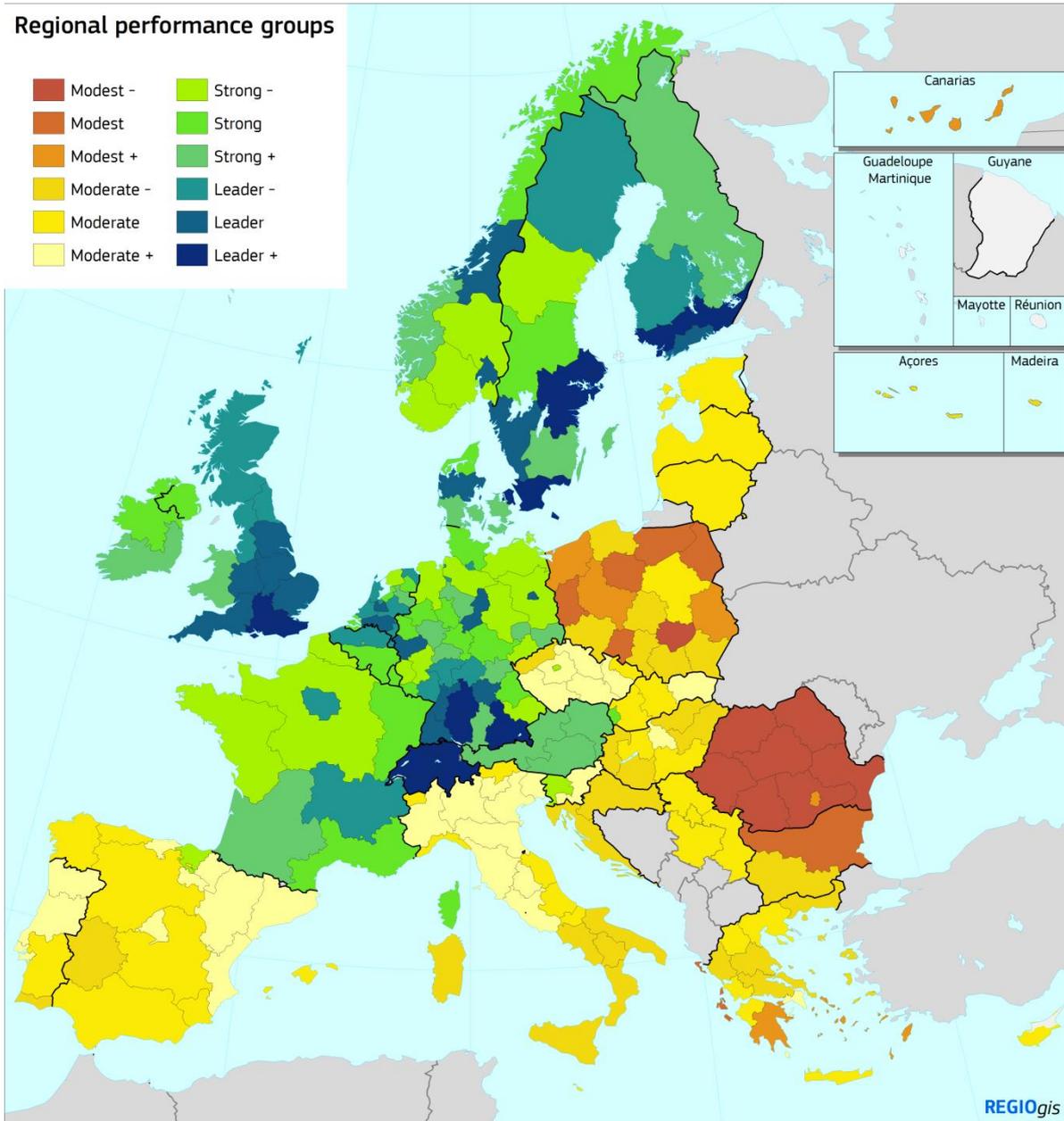
Whereas previous RIS reports only showed group membership for each of the regions, the 2017 report reveals individual rank results. The most innovative region in the EU is *Stockholm* in Sweden, followed by *Hovedstaden* in Denmark, and *South East* in the United Kingdom. The overall most innovative region in Europe is *Zürich* in Switzerland.

For most regions innovation performance has improved over time

For 128 out of 216 regions, or almost 60% of regions, performance has increased. For the regional Innovation Leaders, this share is above 75%, for the regional Strong and Moderate Innovators, it is close to 55%, but for the regional Modest Innovators, it is only close to 30%. Performance reductions are observed mostly in geographically peripheral regions in Europe. Performance has increased for all regions in Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, and for more than 50% of regions in Greece, Italy, Poland, and Sweden. Performance has decreased for all regions in Romania, and for more than 50% of regions in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, and Spain. Over time, there has been a process of divergence in regional performance with increasing performance differences between regions.

Strong link between innovation and regional competitiveness

There is a strong and positive link between regional innovation performance and regional competitiveness, as shown by a comparison of the results in this report with those measuring regional competitiveness in the European Commission's Regional Competitiveness Index.



For Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Malta, performance group membership is identical to that in the European Innovation Scoreboard 2017 report. For these countries, the corresponding colour codes for middle one-third regions have been used.

RIS methodology

The RIS 2017 replicates the European Innovation Scoreboard methodology used at national level to measure performance of regional systems of innovation. The RIS 2017 uses data for 220 regions across Europe for 18 of the 27 indicators used in the EIS 2017. The measurement framework of the EIS 2017 has been refined, resulting in a different and larger set of 27 indicators in the EIS 2017 as compared to the EIS 2016. This refined measurement framework has also been adopted in the RIS 2017. Compared to the RIS 2016, the number of indicators has increased as regional data have become available for Lifelong learning (one of the new EIS indicators), International scientific co-publications, Most-cited publications, Public-private co-publications, Trademark applications, and Design applications. Regional coverage has improved as both Serbia and Switzerland have been included with four and seven regions, respectively.