

Guideline for the ONLINE S3 toolbox tool/application SWOT Analysis

ONLINE S3 – 710659 – Guidelines for the pilot experimentation phase



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HISTORY OF CHANGES

Version	Date	Contributing partner	Summary of changes
Version 0.1	2016-10-07	RIM	Structure of the document, elaboration of required information as a template for all tools
Version 1.0	2017-04-19	IIL	First version of the document
Version 1.0	2017-04-20	RIM	Review
		Intelspace	Review
Version 1.1	2017-04-25	IIL	Spelling corrections and updated step-by-step guide to reflect improvements

DISCLAIMER

The opinion stated in this report reflects the opinion of the ONLINE S3 consortium and not the opinion of the European Commission.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

According to the ONLINE S3 mapping dedicated toward the applied approaches when developing research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3), which studied the methods that was implemented by various European regions and the frequency of their usage, SWOT analysis (illuminating the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) was found to be one of the most commonly used methods, with 87% of the studied regions implementing it in their smart specialisation exercise.

SWOT analysis is simple to perform and does not require any special information or specialised training for those completing it. As the method is widely used and is easy to learn, it is ideal for RIS3 as most actors will be able to implement it without requiring instructions.

This enables regions to perform a rapid assessment of their market position from various perspectives and at different levels. For example, for the economy of the region as a whole or for each or its individual sectors.

Furthermore, SWOT analysis can use input data from any of the stakeholder groupings comprising of the quadruple helix ecosystem: academia, business, public administrations, and civil society. This ensures that all stakeholders are able to share the same reference analysis as they engage with the smart specialisation process.

Figure 1 provides the rationale behind this ONLINE S3's application SWOT analysis.

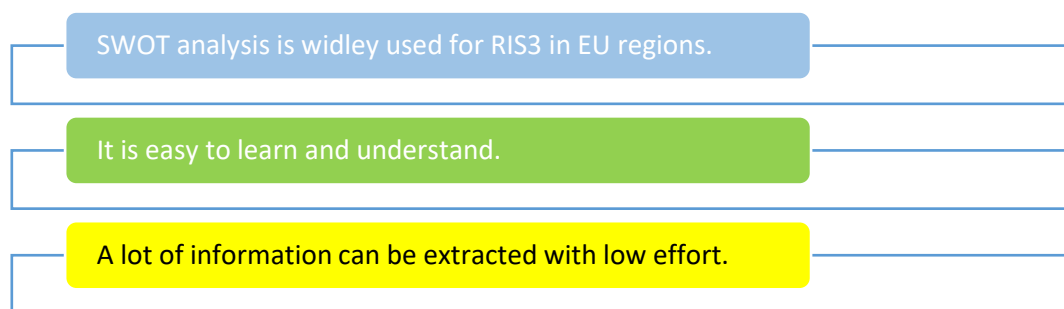


Figure 1: Rational behind this ONLINE S3 application

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

The purpose of SWOT Analysis in the context of smart specialisation strategies is to analyse the **economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for a given region**. This is to help inform a competitive strategy perspective in terms of sustainable growth and positive societal impact through an enhanced global market share. SWOT Analysis identifies key aspects and issues for each quadrant of the SWOT matrix: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This helps identify **promising areas of research and innovation** as well as areas that could be more deeply analysed with other methods and approaches.

Strengths and weaknesses can be considered internal factors related to the region. These sections analyse the intrinsic capabilities of a region such as areas in which the region performs well and areas in which it falls short. In contrast, the **opportunities and threats sections can be considered as external factors**. These sections analyse how well the regions could expand into new areas or develop further into existing areas, or what obstacles and competition regions face in particular areas.

SWOT analysis is helpful for regional analysis to identify key areas for other methods to evaluate more in depth. This method enables stakeholders to predict the prospects of any smart specialisation strategies that they may be considering to determine how each could build on regional strengths and advantages, in addition to mobilising growth in leading areas of research and innovation.

SWOT Analysis is simple to implement and share amongst stakeholders. Once completed it is possible for stakeholders to cross-reference other SWOT Analyses done in their regions. As a completed SWOT Analysis is easy to understand, it enables stakeholders to work together and collaborate.



Figure 2: Overview of this ONLINE S3 application



BENEFITS TO KEY ACTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS

SWOT Analysis is easy to learn and use. Collaboration is easy with SWOT analysis; it can be quickly shared and understood with anyone who is collaborating. It can be completed quickly as it only has four quadrants. Furthermore, it does not require the user to have any specialised knowledge or training.

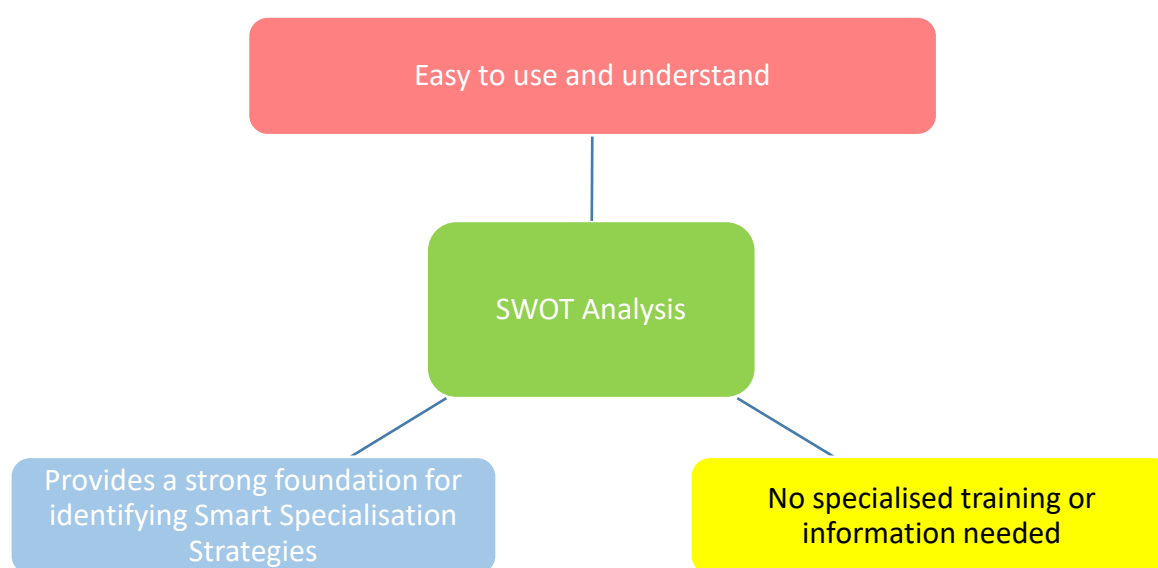


Figure 3: Benefits to stakeholders when using this ONLINE S3 application



KEY ISSUES AND REQUIREMENTS

To achieve high quality outcomes, each quadrant of the SWOT Analysis form should be filled out, ensuring not to confuse strengths and opportunities or weaknesses and threats. It is important to remember what each quadrant of SWOT Analysis represents. Strengths represent positive internal factors of the region, weaknesses are negative internal factors of the region, opportunities are positive external factors, and threats are negative external factors. Consider the following questions that quadrants should answer:

- Strengths
 - What do you do best?
 - What advantages do you have?
- Weaknesses
 - What loses you profit?
 - What should you avoid?
- Opportunities
 - What trends are you aware of?
 - What advantages could new technologies offer?
- Threats
 - What obstacles do you face?
 - What is your competition?

The next step is to answer the following questions for each pair of factors:

- How can you use these Strengths to take advantage of these Opportunities?
- How can you use these Strengths to reduce the impact of these Threats?
- How can you overcome these Weaknesses that stop you from taking advantage of these Opportunities?
- How can you address the Weaknesses that will enable these Threats?

When using the application, it should be noted that work is not automatically saved when leaving the page. Please refer to the step-by-step guide for how to save your work as you complete the analysis.

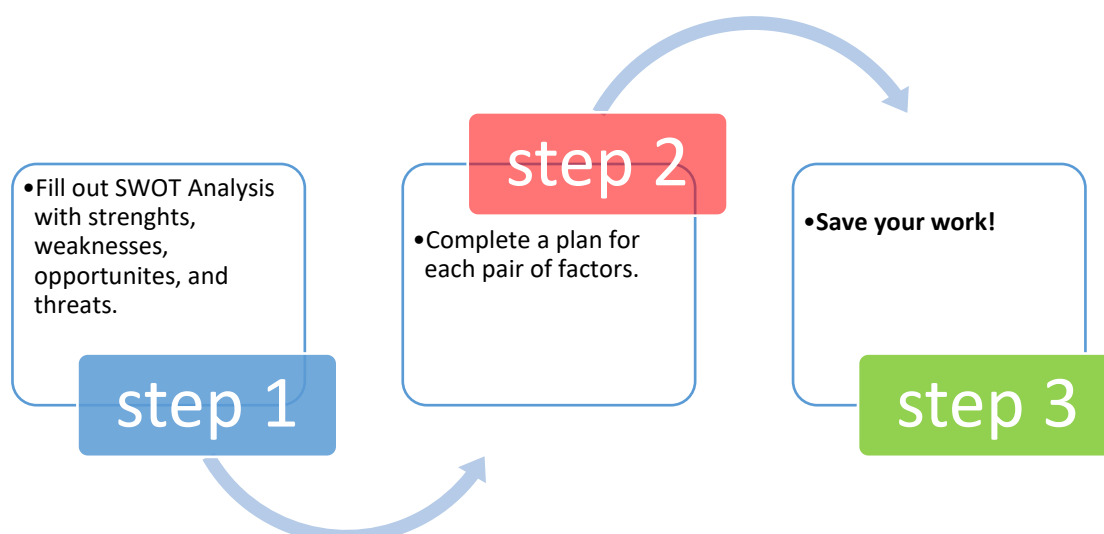


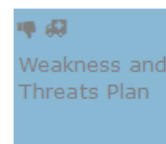
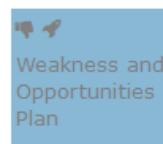
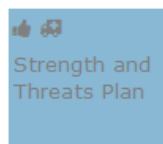
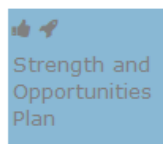
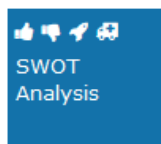
Figure 4: Key issues when using this ONLINE S3 application



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Fill in the SWOT Analysis Form using the following fields:

SWOT Analysis



Use these fields to identify your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<div></div> <div>Add Strength... Add</div>	<div></div> <div>Add Weakness... Add</div>
Opportunities	Threats
<div></div> <div>Add Opportunity... Add</div>	<div></div> <div>Add Threat... Add</div>

Figure 5: SWOT Analysis Form



Use these buttons to change view:

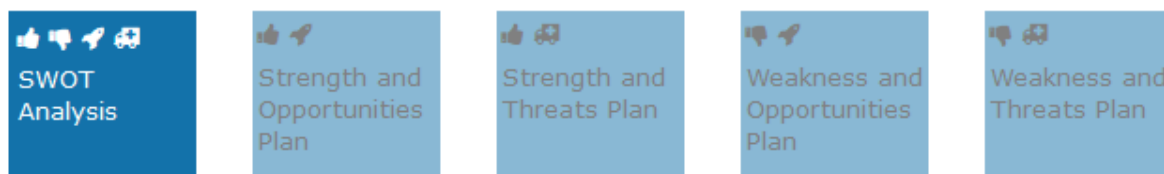
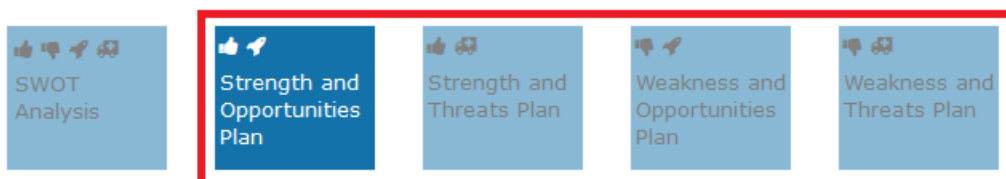


Figure 6: View changing buttons

Use the following views to create a plan based off the completed SWOT Analysis:

SWOT Analysis



How can you use these Strengths to take advantage of these Opportunities?

Strengths	Opportunities
<div></div>	<div></div>

Strengths/Opportunities Plan

Figure 7: Plan Making Views

Click on the 'X' icon to delete something from the list:



Figure 8: Remove Button for SWOT Analysis Tool

Use the 'Save' button to save the current session to a file on disk:

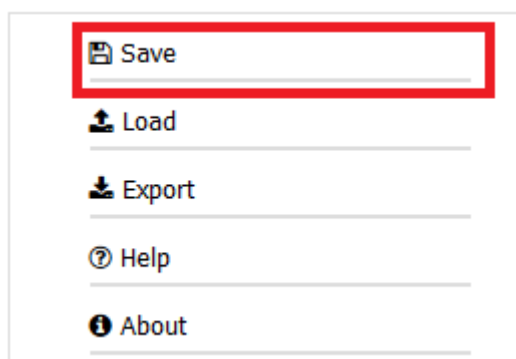


Figure 9: Save Button for SWOT Analysis Tool



Use the 'Load' button to load a file from disk into the current session:

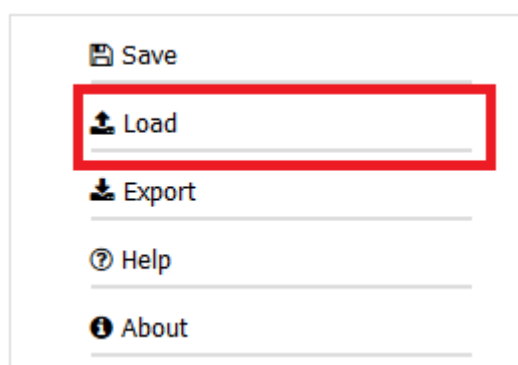


Figure 10: Load Button for SWOT Analysis Tool

Use the 'Export' button to create a new window with a print-friendly version of your lists:

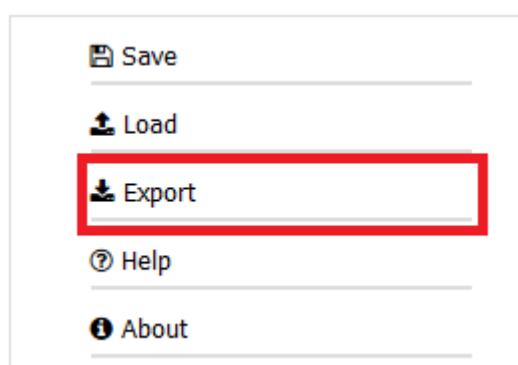


Figure 11: Export Button for SWOT Analysis Tool



FURTHER INFORMATION

Please refer to the 2.7 SWOT Analysis Methodology Fiche created for Work Package 1 of the Online S3 project form further information.

Please refer to the 2.7 SWOT Analysis Online Applications and E-Tools supporting the implementation document created for Work Package 2 of the Online S3 project form further information on the design of the tool.



REFERENCES

Foray, D., Goddard, J., Goenaga Beldarrain, X., Landabaso, M., McCann, P., Morgan, K., Nauwelaers, C., Ortega-Argilés, R. Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (Ris 3), Smart Specialisation Platform. Regional Policy. available at <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/s3pguide>; European Commission; 2012.