OECD comments on the Research and Innovation Strategic Assessment

OCDE monitoring of the MECI Reforms

Research and Innovation to transform Portugal
16 November, Convento São Francisco, Coimbra

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

Content of the presentation

- The rationales for priority setting
- The process for setting priorities
- The selected priorities
- The funding of priorities
- The implementation of priorities
- Good practices from international experience

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The rationales for priority setting

1. **Strengthening system coherence to benefit from critical mass** and reduce fragmentation

2. **Generating systemic impact through coordination** to address complex societal and technological challenges – enable collective action

3. Facilitating experimentation **in areas characterised by high technological and market uncertainty – create safe space for exploring alternative pathways and building capabilities**

4. **Providing credible signals on mid-term public commitment**, reducing strategic and financial uncertainty

Overall context: A call for increased directionality
Priorities are more complex and more numerous

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The process for setting priorities

Portugal is one of the few countries that have engaged in an elaborate and explicit process for priority setting

- Based on a proven, published methodology
- Resourced (PlanAPP, MECI and many other contributors)
- Progressive, cumulative (four stages)
- Participatory (workshops, platforms, etc.)
- Systemic
- Multidimensional (substantive priorities and governance)
- Vision/needs-driven (backcasting) while based on diagnostics
- Bottom-up and top-down phases

Case	Preparation and participation
Portugal [Strategic assessment (2026)]	Formalised and elaborate process based on ST4S strategic evaluation methodology. Multiple successive stages of consultation and diagnostic
Austria [Industrial Strategy 2035 (2026)]	Institutional feedback, internal expertise and exchanges with political advisers
Denmark [Strategic Priorities for Research and Innovation 2026–2029 (2025)]	Ministerial preparation and informal stakeholder input within a political timetable
Finland [Strategic Choices (2026)]	Common assessment perspectives, agency evidence, foresight and documented consultation
Netherlands [Mission-driven innovation policy (2023)]	Sector advisory committees and mission teams, with ministry and implementing-body involvement

A sound basis for collective action toward shared, legitimate priorities

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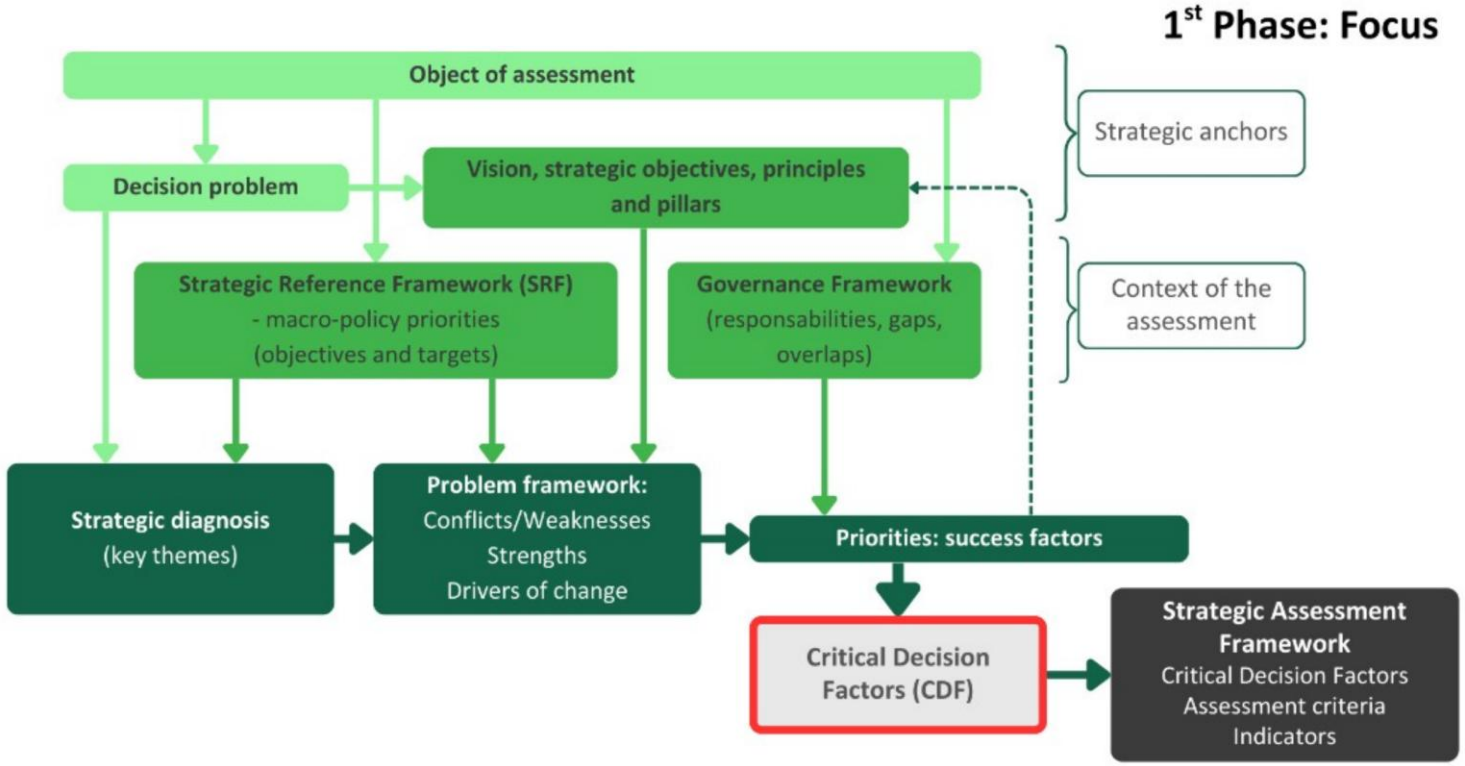
The process for setting priorities

Narrowing down to the strategic domains

- The process is rather complex
- The last step – how it landed on the strategic domains – is less clear (from 23 to 8 to 4)
- AI² priorities – tied to the funding issue
- Priorities without any national research and innovation strategy



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☆ The selected priorities

Four Strategic Domains

1. **Resources, Energy, Climate Adaptation and Territorial Resilience**
2. **Industrial and Digital Transformation**
3. **Housing, Mobility and Smart Cities**
4. **Healthcare, Life Sciences & Longevity**

Like in many countries

- Broad and all encompassing
- In line with international trends

To be used as platforms for strategic coordination, not as a one-off list of priorities

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The selected priorities

Country	Main thematic priorities	Cross-cutting priorities
Portugal [Strategic Assessment]	4 Strategic domains	R&D areas
Denmark	3 areas: critical technologies and defence; green transition; health and life sciences	University research capacity and complementary investments
Finland [Strategic Choices (2026)]	5 areas: data economy, disruptive technologies, health, climate/Arctic, security	Risk-taking in RDI; attracting RDI investment
Germany [High-Tech Agenda 2025]	6 key technologies, including AI, quantum, microelectronics, biotechnology, energy and batteries	Technology transfer, talent, financing, infrastructure and research system resilience
Netherlands [Mission-driven innovation policy 2023]	5 missions: energy, circular economy, health, agriculture/water/food, security	Key enabling technologies and digitalisation
Norway [Long term plan]	6 broad themes, complemented by missions on sustainable feed, social inclusion and circular economy	Competitiveness, sustainability and research quality/accessibility
United Kingdom [UK Modern Industrial Strategy]	8 growth sectors, including advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital technologies, life sciences and defence	Targeted attention to frontier industries, including AI

The funding of priorities

Portugal – share of funding by pillar

35–45% — **Pillar 1 – R&D areas**
with a planned increase in the future

30–40% — **Pillar 2 – Strategic Domains**
including about 15% for each the four Strategic Domains

25–35% — **Pillar 3 – Innovation Promotion unit**

Comparison with France (2025)

- Institutional funding for research (universities and “organismes”): 11–12 bn€
- Generic research call by ANR: 834 M€

- Strategic research call by ANR: 400 M€
- France 2030 “directional research”: 4.5 bn€



Non-oriented: 13 bn€ **Oriented/strategic: 5 bn€**

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The funding of priorities

Country profile	Countries
Mainly rely on institutional funding (around 70% of total public funding)	Switzerland, France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Poland
Around 60% of institutional funding	Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, **Portugal**, Slovakia and Switzerland
Less than 50% of institutional funding	Ireland, Belgium and New Zealand

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The implementation of priorities

Countries differ considerably in where STI priorities acquire financial force

- Some connect strategic choices directly to multiannual funding commitments
- Others establish broad orientations that ministries and agencies must subsequently translate into budget proposals and programmes

Case	Connection to resources	Subsequent choices
Austria	Three-year RTI Pacts and institutional agreements specify financial and thematic commitments	FFG designs calls and selects projects within agreed priorities
Denmark	Multiannual political agreement identifies funding lines and implementing bodies, followed by allocation letters	Funders translate allocations into programmes, with provisions for bounded reallocation
Finland	National choices guide fiscal planning and agency priorities	Ministries and agencies determine programme allocations, instruments and cooperation arrangements
Norway	Long-term national plan provides direction across separately funded ministerial portfolios	Ministries make annual budget decisions; the Research Council advises on investments and manages programmes within available envelopes

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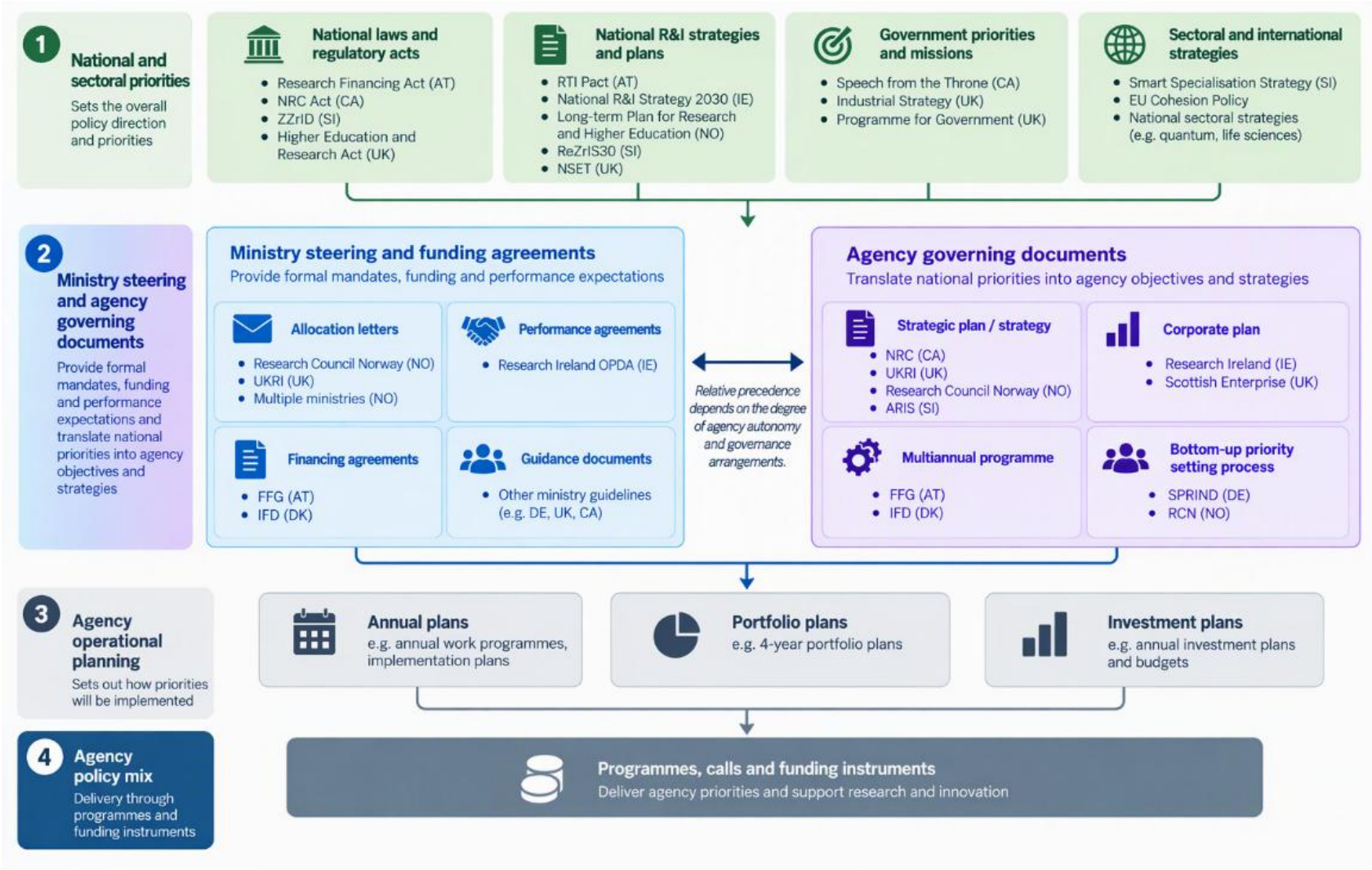
The implementation of priorities



Priorities need to trickle down to ministries, agencies, research and innovation institutions

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Good practices from international experience

It is just the beginning of the journey…

- Make the Strategic Domains national priorities, not only AI² priorities
- Develop roadmaps / strategic agendas in each Strategic Domain
- Create cross-government coordination spaces in each of the Strategic Domains
- Empower the agencies for implementing the strategic agendas in the Strategic Domains
- Establish a clear and transparent process for monitoring the implementation of the strategic agendas
- Define missions within the Strategic Domains?

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Muito obrigado!

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