



Synergies between ESIF and Horizon 2020: role of strategic planning

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Europe's innovation divide undermines competitiveness

- ❑ *Large parts of the EU out of 'sync'*
- ❑ *Modest and Moderate Innovators holding back the EU as a whole*
- ❑ *Grand policy designs at risk without a sound and functioning base*
- ❑ *Identification of priorities and strategies of crucial importance – yet still, among the major bottlenecks*

Why do we foster synergies between Horizon 2020 and ESIF ?

Scarce resources:

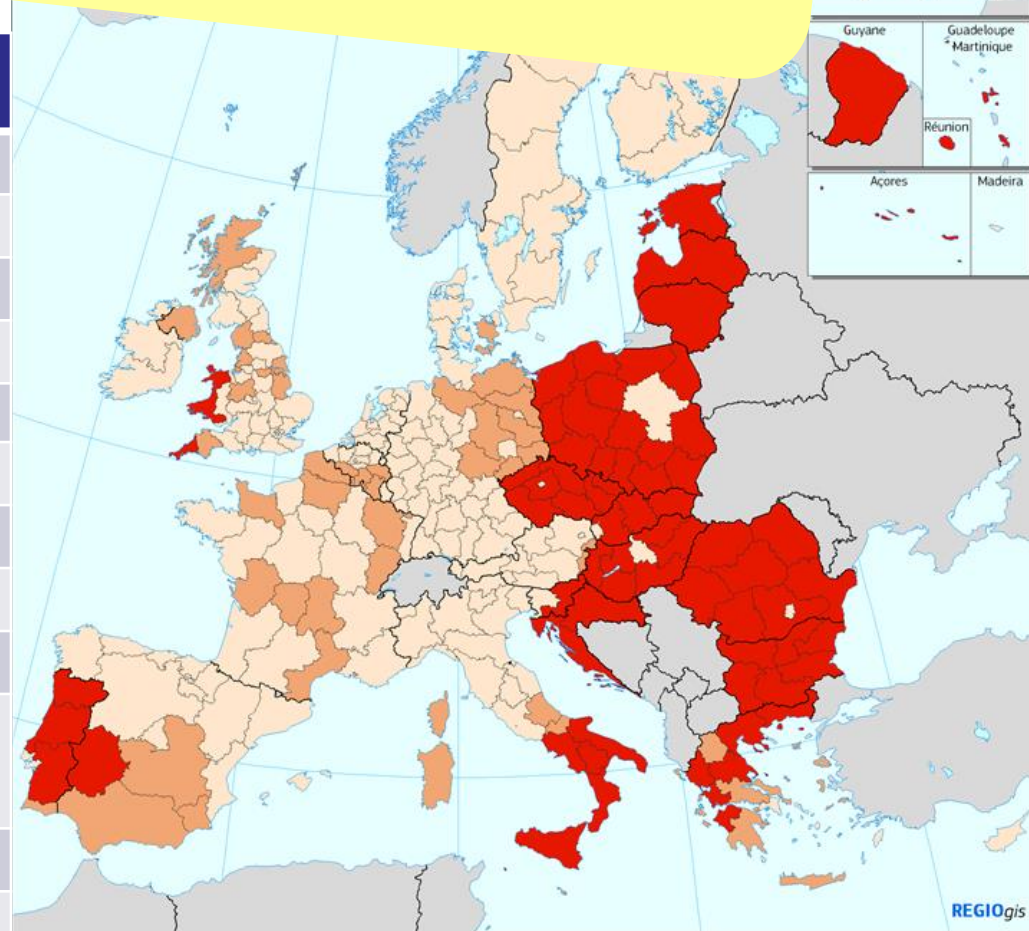
- More efficiency
- Best use of public funds
- ✓ *Synergies between Horizon 2020 and ESIF aim at maximising **quantity, quality and impact** of research and innovation investments through **interactions** between two policy frameworks*

Up to €100 billion for innovation investments bolstering over 100 smart specialisation strategies

Eligibility map 2014-20

- Less developed region (GDP/head: less than 75%)
- Transition regions (GDP/head between 75% and 90%)
- More developed region (GDP/head: more than 90%)

	Billion EUR
Less developed regions	164.3
Transition regions	31.7
More developed regions	49.5
Cohesion Fund	66.3
European territorial cooperation	8.9
<i>Of which</i>	
<i>Cross border cooperation</i>	6.6
<i>Transnational cooperation</i>	1.8
<i>Interregional cooperation</i>	0.5
Outermost regions and northern sparsely populated regions	1.4
Youth Employment initiative	3.0
TOTAL	325.1



About the new Cohesion policy

(ESIF – European Structural and Investment Funds)

- ESIF will focus on Europe 2020 objectives for **smart, sustainable and inclusive growth** / **list of 11 thematic objectives** for ESIF developed around the Europe 2020 priorities
- New regulatory provisions for thematic concentration (R&I part of the minimum 60-80% concentration for ERDF funds in more developed regions - 50% in less developed regions)
- Support to applied research and innovation for the purpose of regional socio-economic development
- Capacity building for innovation and growth through the promotion of innovation friendly business environments
- **Smart Specialisation – strategic approach to economic development through strategic support for R&I / *Ex-ante Conditionality* for the use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for any kind of R&D&I investments**

Key to Synergies: more quality investment for research and innovation from Cohesion Policy

- ✓ **Smart Specialisation** *ex-ante conditionality: focus on priority R&I investments for place-based growth*
- ✓ **Thematic Concentration**: *all regions (rich and poor) have to spend the vast majority of their ERDF resources to just 4 out of the 11 thematic objectives (R&I, Low Carbon, ICT and SMEs) (from 80% to 50%)*

Research and Innovation

investment priorities for ERDF

Thematic objective 1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation:

- Enhancing research and innovation infrastructures (R&I) and capacities to develop R&I excellence and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest
- Promoting business R&I investment, product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation and public service application, demand simulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation
- Supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production in Key Enabling Technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies



European Commission

Combining Horizon 2020 & ESIF through funding of successive / parallel / alternative / particular projects

Capacity Building
National/Regional R&I
systems

Research & Development

Innovation

Market

Horizon 2020

ESI Funds

R&I Infrastructures and
Equipment

ESFRI

Skills

Business Advisory
services

Excellent R&I

Demonstration
Pilots

SME instrument

Marie Skłodowska-Curie KICs

KETs

Business Innovation

Procurement

PPPs

prizes

procurement

SME

Pilot lines

Financial
instruments

Grant
agreements

Regional
Policy

About Synergies...

- Obtaining **more impacts on competitiveness, jobs and growth** by combining ESIF and Horizon2020
- **Amplifying** projects / initiatives under the other instrument
- **Carrying further the projects** of the other instrument **towards market**, e.g. SME instrument 'seals of excellence'
- **Exploit complementarities** while at the same time avoid overlaps and exclude double-financing (fraud)

Synergies in practice



- Responsibility lies now with the Member States and regions' planning authorities > need to create the appropriate “space” in the Operational Programmes for synergy actions with Horizon 2020
- The Commission has now produced a concise Guide on Synergies

Who has to act ?

- *Key role for national and regional authorities as they plan future investments on research and innovation, including from the ESIF*
- *Research stakeholders (Public/ private): they should be better informed about the said investment plans and operational measures*
- *NCPs*
- *Commission services*

Typical synergy actions driven by the ESIF OP include (non-exhaustive list of examples):

- Support for investment of *research infrastructure and equipment* including competence centres (combination of research and advanced training centres)
- Support to the *whole innovation cycle* through improving the overall framework conditions for businesses (but also support measures towards *social innovation*)
- Support to research actions and infrastructure investments in the area of *Key Enabling Technologies (KETs)*
- Preparation of research and innovation stakeholders towards a better participation in the Horizon 2020 Calls (*support via training, raising awareness, networking and partner identification*)
- Support to *downstream measures like exploitation and commercialisation of finished or about to finish research projects*
- Reinforcement of the *local impact (including additional work packages) of agreed Horizon 2020 projects (that are by definition transnational)*



Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation Background

- **Currently national / regional disparities in research excellence and innovation performance, hamper competitiveness**, business growth and employment creation. Simultaneously, a number of countries are experiencing low participation in the EU FP; Wide political debate during Horizon 2020 negotiation process.
- **Disparities due to structural issues, such as:** insufficient national RTDI investment, insufficient capacities and reduced access to international networks.
- **Problems need to be primarily addressed at national and regional level** and through other instruments, **such as Cohesion Policy funding.**
- **However Horizon 2020 will also take relevant action under the separate specific objective "Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation" (WIDESPREAD)**



Spreading excellence and widening participation through Horizon 2020

- New **Part IV** in Horizon 2020 (budget circa EUR 800M)
- Main actions on **Teaming** (Centres of Excellence), **Twinning** (institutional networking), **ERA Chairs** (bringing excellence to institutions); also **Policy Support Facility** and a special action from **COST on Widening actions**



Teaming

- ❑ **Teaming of excellent research institutions and low performing RDI regions:** Teaming aims at the creation of new (or significant upgrade of existing) **centres of excellence in low performing RDI Member States and regions.**
- ❑ It will focus on the preparatory phase for setting up or upgrading and modernising such an institution facilitated by a teaming process with a leading counterpart in Europe, including supporting the development of a business plan.
- ❑ Proposals have to fit with the overall Smart Specialisation Strategy of the host
- ❑ A commitment of the recipient region or Member State (e.g. support via Cohesion Policy Funds) is expected. Subject to the quality of the business plan, the Commission may provide further seed financial support for the first steps of implementation of the centre.
- ❑ Building links with innovative clusters and recognising excellence in low performing RDI Member States and regions, including through peer reviews and awarding labels of excellence to those institutions that meet international standards, will be considered.



Twinning

- ❑ **Twinning of research institutions:** Twinning aims at significantly strengthening a defined field of research in an emerging institution through links with at least two internationally-leading institutions in a defined field. A comprehensive set of measures underpinning this linkage would be supported (e.g. staff exchanges, expert visits, short-term on-site or virtual trainings, workshops; conference attendance; organisation of joint summer school type activities; dissemination and outreach activities).
- ❑ Twinning proposals are also encouraged to explain their links with the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the host location of the applicant institution



ERA Chairs

- Establishing 'ERA Chairs' to attract outstanding academics to institutions with a clear potential for research excellence, in order to help these institutions fully unlock this potential and hereby create a level playing field for research and innovation in the European Research Area.
 - *This will include institutional support for creating a competitive research environment and the framework conditions necessary for attracting, retaining and developing top research talent within these institutions.*

Our experience with the first Widening Calls (2013-2015)

- First Widening Calls launched in December 2013:
 - TEAMING – closed on 17/9/14 – 169 proposals received / 31 projects Stage-1 to be funded /
 - ERA Chairs – closed on 15/10/14 – 88 proposals received; 13 funded projects
 - TWINNING – closed on May 7, 2015; 543 proposals received
- Huge mobilisation of stakeholders both from Low Performing Countries and from the Advanced Institutions side
- Several issues identified that still needed clarifications: FAQ on Participant Portal updated several times
- Information Day held in Brussels on July 3, 2014 with over 200 participants
- Several workshops and conferences held in the LPC including tele-conferences and video conferences
- Serious competition
- Most proposals took seriously into consideration the link to Smart Specialisation



Bottom Line:

- A significant effort for **upgrading research excellence** in the institutions involved in the Low Performing Country
- Not a cohesion but a performance oriented approach
- Focus is on institution building, not on regional development
- Links with Smart Specialisation Strategies in the Low Performing Countries desirable in the case of ERA Chairs but not compulsory!
- Member States' research and innovation actions co-funded in the context of the Structural Funds can be coupled to ERA Chairs, Teaming and Twinning initiatives
- **Big expectations – big risks; but maybe also huge gains**

Widening actions and Smart Specialisation

- ❑ ***Teaming for Excellence*** has the strongest link to RIS3 since any Centre of Excellence proposed (new or upgraded) has to be fully integrated in the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the country or region involved (to avoid the ‘Cathedrals in the Desert’ effect)
- ❑ ***Twinning and ERA Chairs***, have no compulsory link to RIS3, but the Commission considers that such a link is strongly recommended

Learn more:

Horizon 2020 Participant Portal:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html>

Cohesion policy (2014-20)

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/index_en.cfm



Learn more:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm



**Thanks a lot
for your
attention**