Synergies between Horizon 2020 and European Structural & Investment Funds

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Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation
BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

• Disparities in research and innovation performance do exist between Member States and Regions (see innovation scoreboard)
• These are a barrier to competitiveness, growth and jobs
• Investments in R&I pays off in terms of jobs and growth
Synergies – what does it mean?

• The aim is to have **significant impacts on the society and economy by combining** the innovation investments under the smart specialisation priorities with world-class research and innovation initiatives supported by Horizon 2020

• This is obtained through **meaningful, complementary, mutually reinforcing interactions** between the investment strategies and interventions under the ESI Funds and Horizon 2020
Building synergies between EU Funds to maximise quantity, quality & impact of R&I investments for jobs & growth

"The House of Synergies"

Political Mandate:
2014 Juncker: "Synergies!"

Legal Basis:
2013 ESIF (OPs) & Horizon 2020*

Commitment:
EU 2020 & Innovation Union (S3)
Synergies still high on the agenda

- 6 July 2016: European Parliament Resolution highlighting many key issues on synergies and requesting a communication
- 27 May 2016: Competitiveness Council conclusions
- 24 June 2016: General Affairs Council conclusions
- 23 Sept 2016: RTD and REGIO Director-Generals meeting
- Up-coming Commission Communication on Smart Specialisation (including synergies) in 2017
Synergies – what does it mean?

- **Different intervention logic**: Horizon 2020 is based on the pursuit of S&T excellence; the ESI Funds address broader economic, social and territorial development.
- **Different administrative logics and timelines**: Horizon 2020 is centrally managed by the Commission's services; responsibility for the ESI Funds is shared between Brussels and the Member States and regions.
- **But achievement of synergies is possible** to get more out of Horizon 2020 and ESIF working together than would be achieved by them working separately, the link being **smart specialisation strategy**
Smart specialisation

- Smart specialisation as the ex-ante conditionality for R&I funding under the ESI Funds that helps regions identify and develop their strengths
- More than 120 strategies already in place or nearing completion
- Together with concentration principle this means € 43 bn available to support core RTDI and more than € 120 bn for broad innovation including ICT & support for SMEs
- Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms Aimed at accelerating implementation and facilitate trans-national cooperation among the regions with related RIS3 priorities and the development of a pipeline of concrete investment projects. (TSSP in Energy, Agri-Food and Industrial Modernisation).
• **Synergy-type 1**: Funding actions *(sequential - upstream)* that build research and innovation capacities of actors aimed at participating in Horizon 2020 or other internationally competitive research and innovation programmes

• **Synergy-type 2**: Funding actions *(sequential - downstream)* that capitalise on already implemented Framework Programme/Horizon 2020 research and innovation actions aimed at market up-take

• **Synergy-type 3**: Combining funding from Horizon 2020 and the ESIF (and/or from other sources) for *coordinated parallel actions* that complement each other

• **Synergy-type 4**: Bringing together funding from Horizon 2020 and the ESIF in an *integrated research and innovation project* that could be a single action or a group of inter-dependent actions or operations

• **Synergy-type 5**: Providing funding from *alternative sources* for positively evaluated Framework Programme/Horizon 2020 proposals but not funded due to insufficient Call budgets (Seal of Excellence)
How to make it happen – guidance & practical assistance

The Commission provides a range of guidance and practical assistance to promote meaningful synergies:

- **Practical Guide to EU funding from 2008**, updated in 2012
- **Synergies Guide of 2014**, produced jointly by DGs RTD & REGIO.
- **2016 Brochure of practical examples** of synergies on the ground
- Direct assistance by the **Smart Specialisation Platform** at the JRC-IPTS in Seville but also experts engaged by both DGs REGIO & RTD
- **Community of Practice** for Implementation of the Seal of excellence
- Wide communication: **Stairway 2 excellence**, bilateral meetings
How to make it happen

✓ Reference to synergies in Work Programmes introduction
✓ Highlight importance of synergies in the result exploitation phase of research & innovation projects (demonstrators, etc) - DOWNSTREAM
✓ Actions enabling mapping of thematic priorities, studies, analysis of possible synergies and enabling networking between Managing authorities - UPSTREAM
✓ "WIDENING ACTIONS" with strong component of potential synergies with ESIF – COMBINED
✓ ESFRI infrastructures: example ELI
✓ JTI (Clean Sky...)
Widening actions & synergies

- **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).

- This allows complementary investments in the Centre of Excellence (equipment, infrastructure, etc) with ESIF money - letter of commitment is requested.

- **Twinning and ERA Chairs**, have no compulsory link to RIS3, but the Commission considers that such a link is strongly recommended.
THE SEAL OF EXCELLENCE: MAXIMISING IMPACT OF R&I INVESTMENTS

Excellent proposals receive the Seal of Excellence certificate:

The EU quality label for first-class innovation ideas worthy of investment

Horizon 2020 evaluation

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Pilot using the SME Instrument

- Close to intervention logic of ESIF authorities:
- Single company
- Small scale R&I actions
- Close to market

Regions/MS taking-up 'seal of excellence' proposals:

- Benefit from pre-screening by H2020
- Make the most of a unique, high quality evaluation process
- Better use the resources
- Invest on high local impact proposals
CERTIFICATE

- Awarded to ALL qualifying SME instrument PROPOSALS
- Only downloadable by SMEs in 'My area' of Participants Portal
- Informs
- Explains
- Builds reputation
- Fraud-proof
- Accompanying letter with useful links

Certificate delivered by the European Commission, as the institution managing Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2014-2020

The project proposal [Proposal number], [Proposal Acronym], [Proposal Title]
Submitted under the Horizon 2020's call [Mastercall name] ([Call name]) of [cutoff date] in the area of
Call Topic
by [Coordinator name and address]

following evaluation by an international panel of independent experts

WAS SUCCESSFUL IN A HIGHLY COMPETITIVE EVALUATION PROCESS* AS A HIGH QUALITY PROJECT PROPOSAL

This proposal is recommended for funding by other sources since Horizon 2020 resources available for this specific Call were already allocated following a competitive ranking.

* This means passing all stringent Horizon 2020 assessment thresholds for the 3 award criteria (excellence, impact, quality and efficiency of implementation) required to receive funding from the EU budget Horizon 2020.

Corina Crețu,
Commissioner for Regional Policy

Carlos Moedas,
Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation

Brussels,
SME INSTRUMENT:

HIGHLY POPULAR AND COMPETITIVE SCHEME

MANY DESERVING, FEW FUNDED...

Phase 2
- Proposals below quality threshold: 4,606
- Proposals above quality threshold: 2,937

Phase 1
- Proposals below quality threshold: 15,719
- Proposals above quality threshold: 2,769

Phase 2
- Above threshold not funded: 2,508
- Above threshold Funded: 429

Phase 1
- Above threshold not funded: 1,263
- Above threshold Funded: 1,506
Seal of Excellence – First experiences

• Rapidly expanding 'Community of Practice' (interested funding bodies): more than 130 members planning practical steps for supporting Seal proposals supported by Commission services

• Increasing number of 'Seal-friendly' support schemes in place at national/regional level (ranging from advisory to funding)

• More than 200 SoE proposals funded so far, more in the pipeline

• 'Seal friendly' guidelines on State Aid under finalisation
Ideas for expanding synergies

• Extension of the Seal of Excellence to other areas of Horizon 2020, such as Widening; Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Cluster facilitated projects for new industrial value chains
• Explore ways for RTD actions to support the deployment of Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms
• Close collaboration with the JTIs to guide them in their synergies activities, based on the excellent work already undertaken by Clean Sky
• Put in place a system to gather information on synergies through addressing FP stakeholders but also ESIF authorities
• Explore synergies with respect to strategic priorities and alignment of funding (e.g. eligible costs) and accountability rules
Focus on the final objective
Invest in mutual knowledge
BE CREATIVE!

HORIZON 2020