



Stairway to Excellence.  
Analysis of the key success factors and barriers on  
building synergies between ESIF and Horizon 2020

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# Rationale

- Supporting synergies in the use of two EU funding sources (ESIF & Horizon 2020) may deliver additional gains in terms of:
  - innovation results
  - close the innovation gap in Europe
  - promote economic growth
- The overall political rationale of identifying synergies between ESIF, H2020 and other R+I programmes is to **maximize impact** and **efficiency of public funding**.
- Innovation funds increased under cohesion policy from 6% of the funds in the 2000-06 period to around 25% in the 2007-13 period
- Roughly 9% of the public spending on R&I in the EU came from the EU budget, divided almost equally between the 7<sup>th</sup> FP & the ESIFs

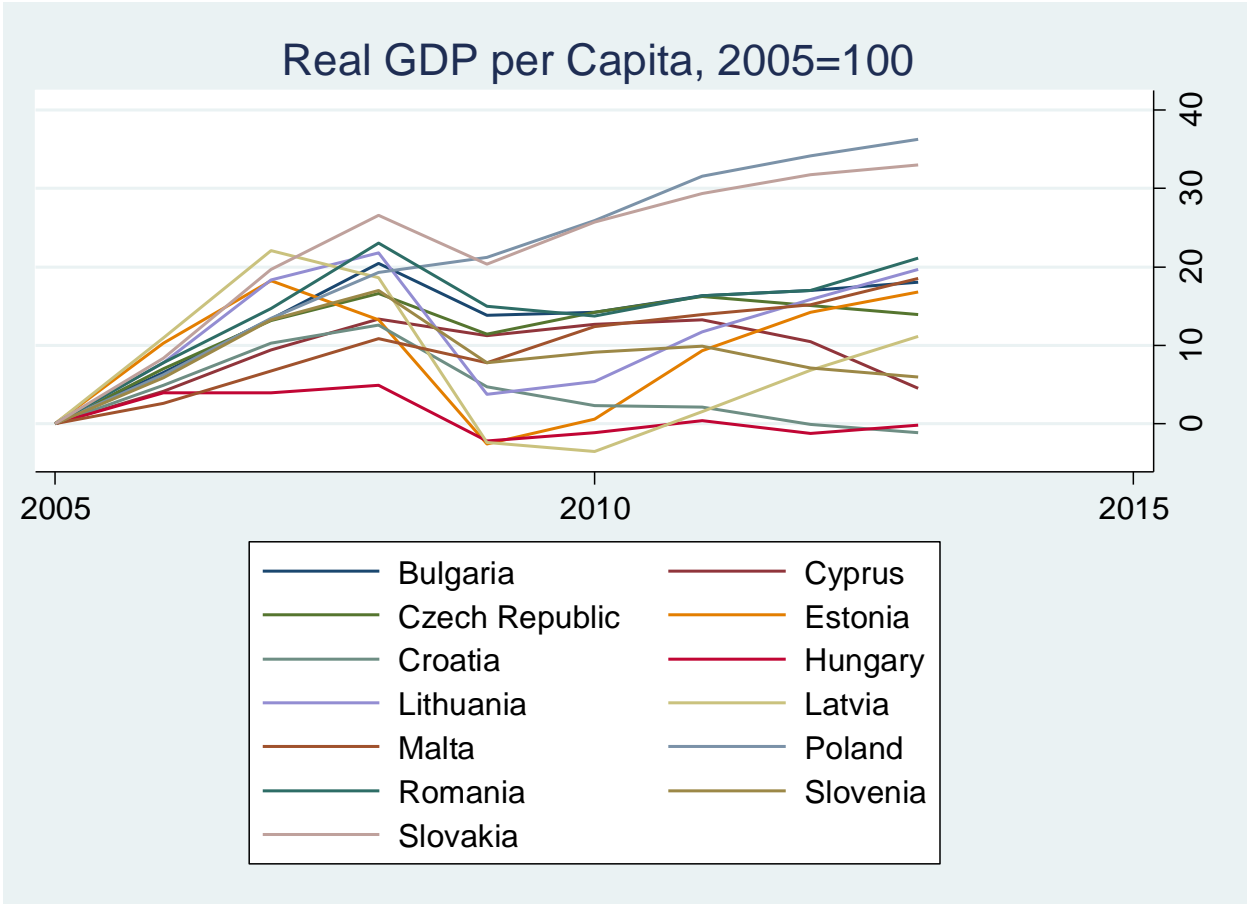
# Objectives

- S3P supports MSs & Regions to design and upgrade their RIS3 by identifying a limited number of R&D and industrial activities with high innovation potential.
  - This innovation potential may be further reinforced & developed by using ESIFs in order to make catching-up MSs & regions more competitive in spatially blind & excellence-based H2020 calls.
  - Beyond a stronger innovation generation capacity, there is room for increasing the innovation absorption capacity by new MSs in the context of past FP projects.
- The project has **two main objectives**, namely:
  - The provision of assistance to EU13 to enhance the value of these two EU funding sources for R&I by promoting their combination;
  - Stimulating the early and effective implementation of national and regional Smart Specialisation Strategies.

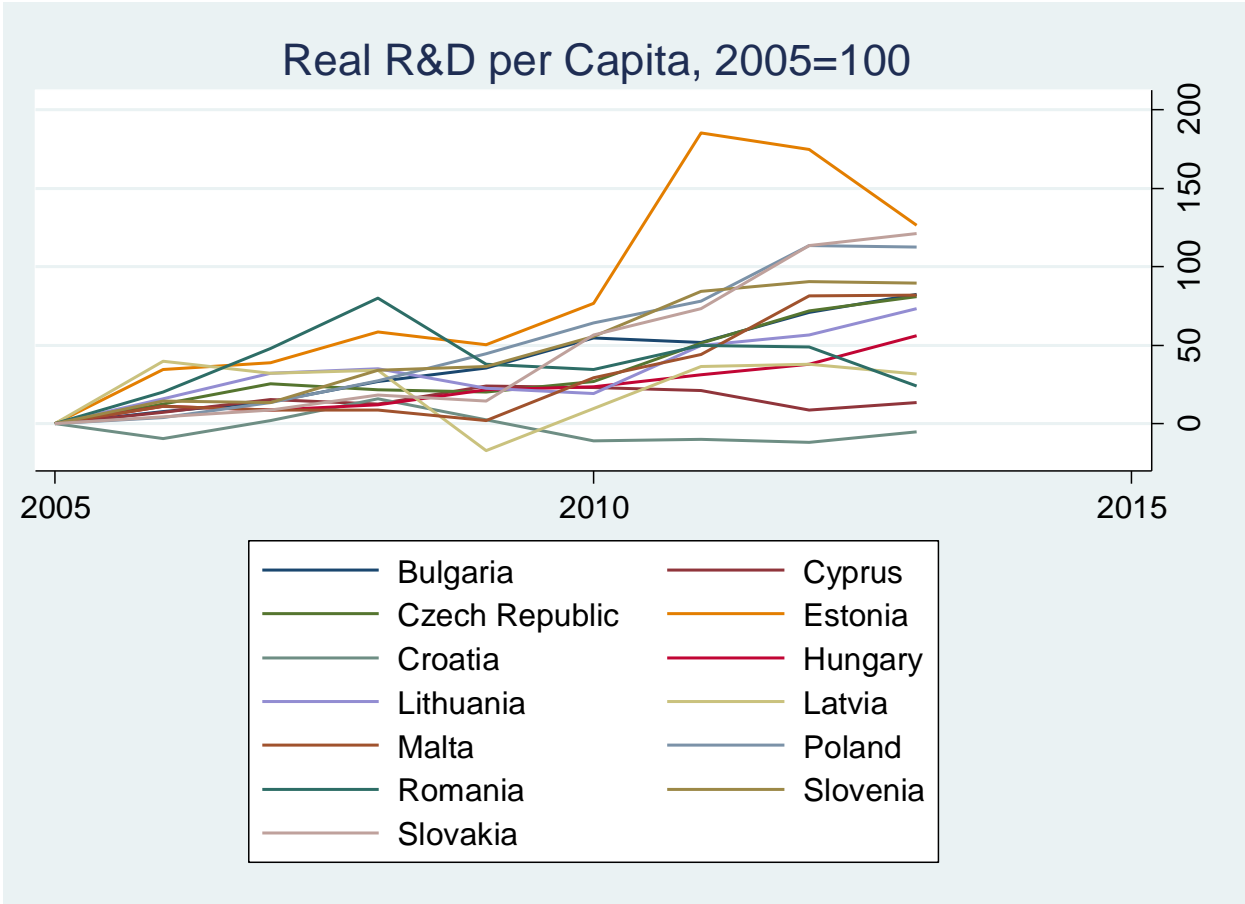
# General macro-economic indicators

	<b>EU13*</b>	<b>EU15</b>	<b>EU28</b>
Population	105 127 027	401 484 800	506 611 827
GDP - Euro per capita	10 417	29 800	25 700
GDP - Euro per capita in % of EU average	40.5	115.3	100
R&D expenditure - Total (million Euro)	11 521.81	260 036.97	271 558.78
R&D expenditure - Total [% of GDP]	1.05	2.09	2.01
R&D expenditure - Business Enterprise Sector (BES) [% of GDP]	0.54	1.34	1.28
R&D expenditure - Government Sector (GOV) [% of GDP]	0.23	0.25	0.25
R&D expenditure - Higher Education Sector (HES) [% of GDP]	0.27	0.49	0.47
R&D expenditure - Private non-Profit Sector (PnP) [% of GDP]	0.004	0.02	0.02
R&D Personnel** - Total (% of active population)	0.62	1.25	1.12
R&D Personnel - BES (% of active population)	0.25	0.69	0.60
R&D Personnel - GOV (% of active population)	0.15	0.15	0.15
R&D Personnel - HES (% of active population)	0.22	0.39	0.36
R&D Personnel - PnP (% of active population)	0.002	0.01	0.01
Unemployment Rate***	9.9	9.50	9.60

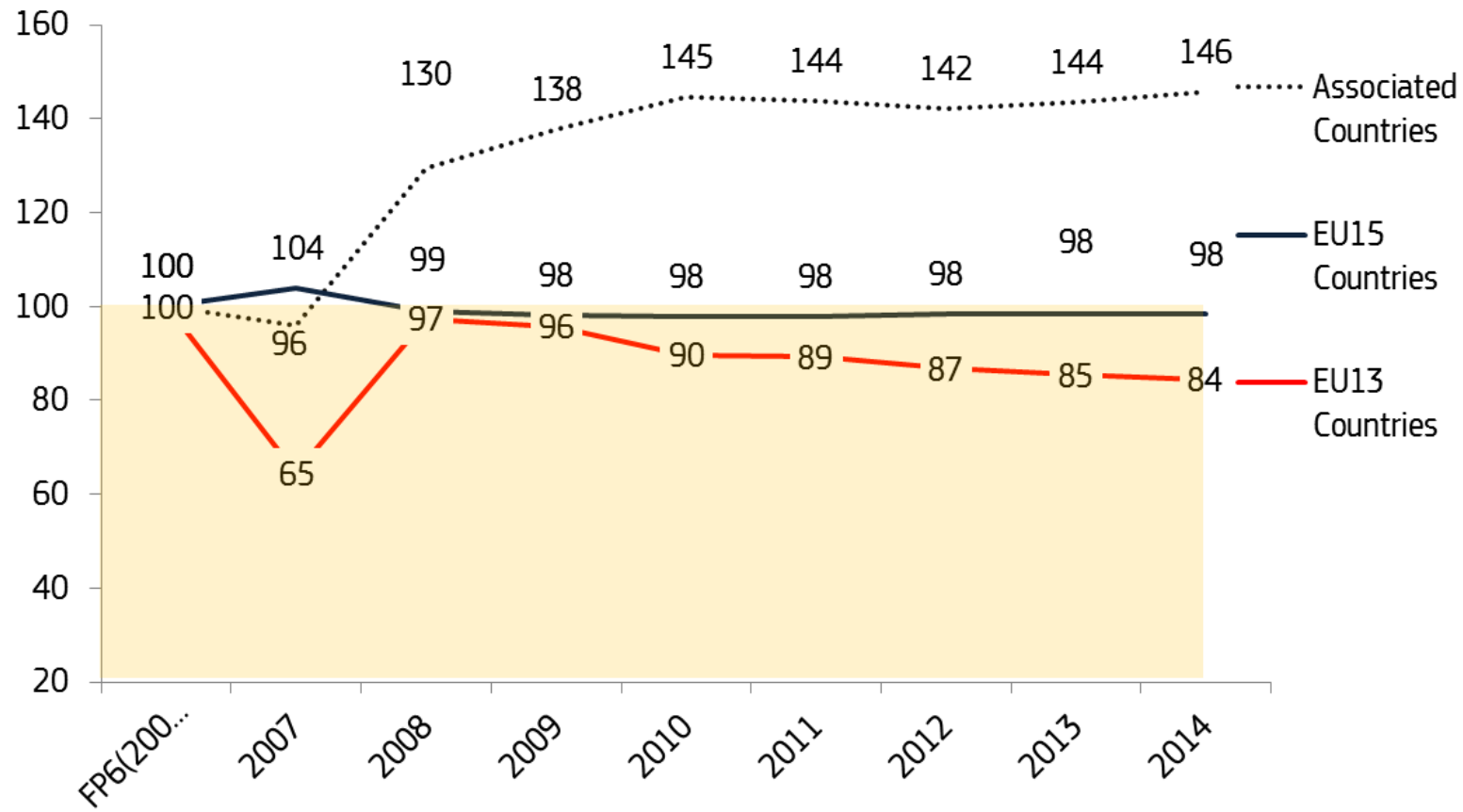
# General macro-economic indicators



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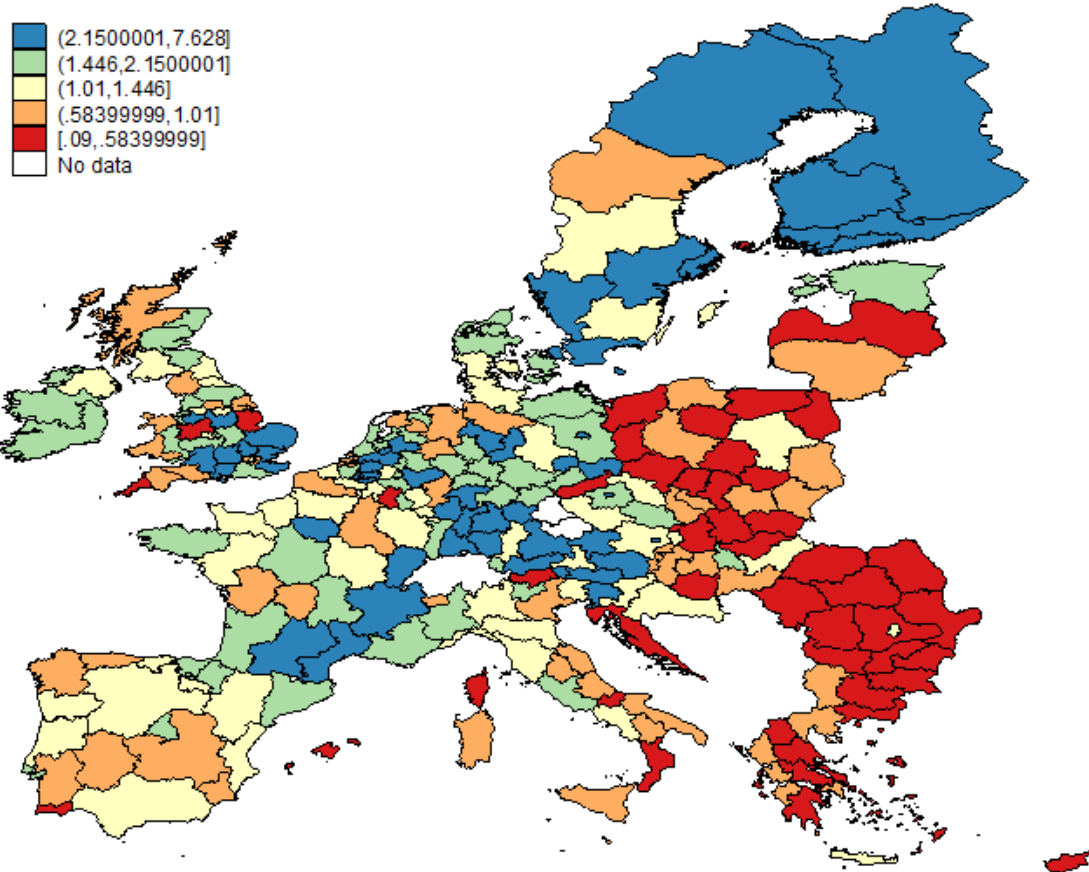


# Share of EC FP7 contribution received between 2007 and 2014 (starting from FP6)



# Regional R&D Intensity

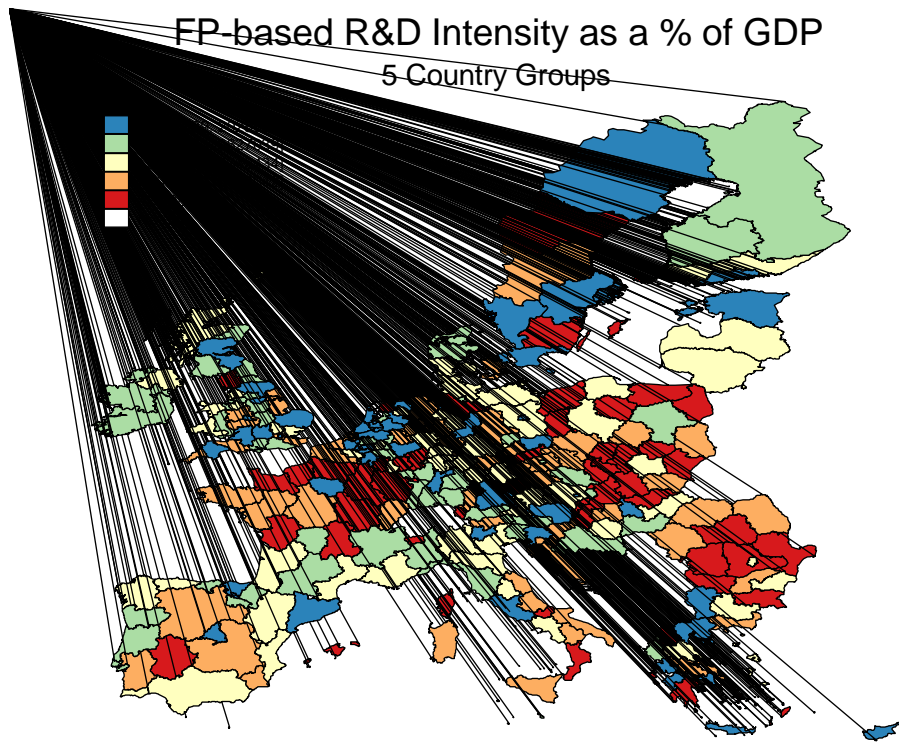
## Regional R&D Intensity as a % of GDP 5 Country Groups



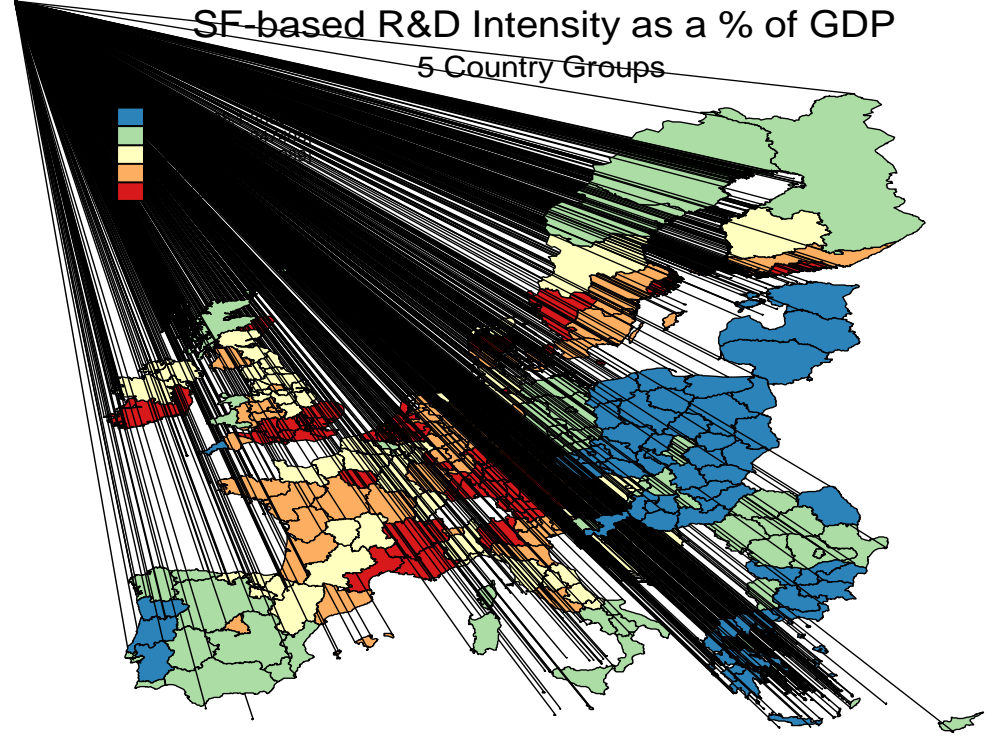
Source: JRC/IPTS



# Funding Distribution of 7<sup>th</sup> FP and SFs



Source: JRC/IPTS

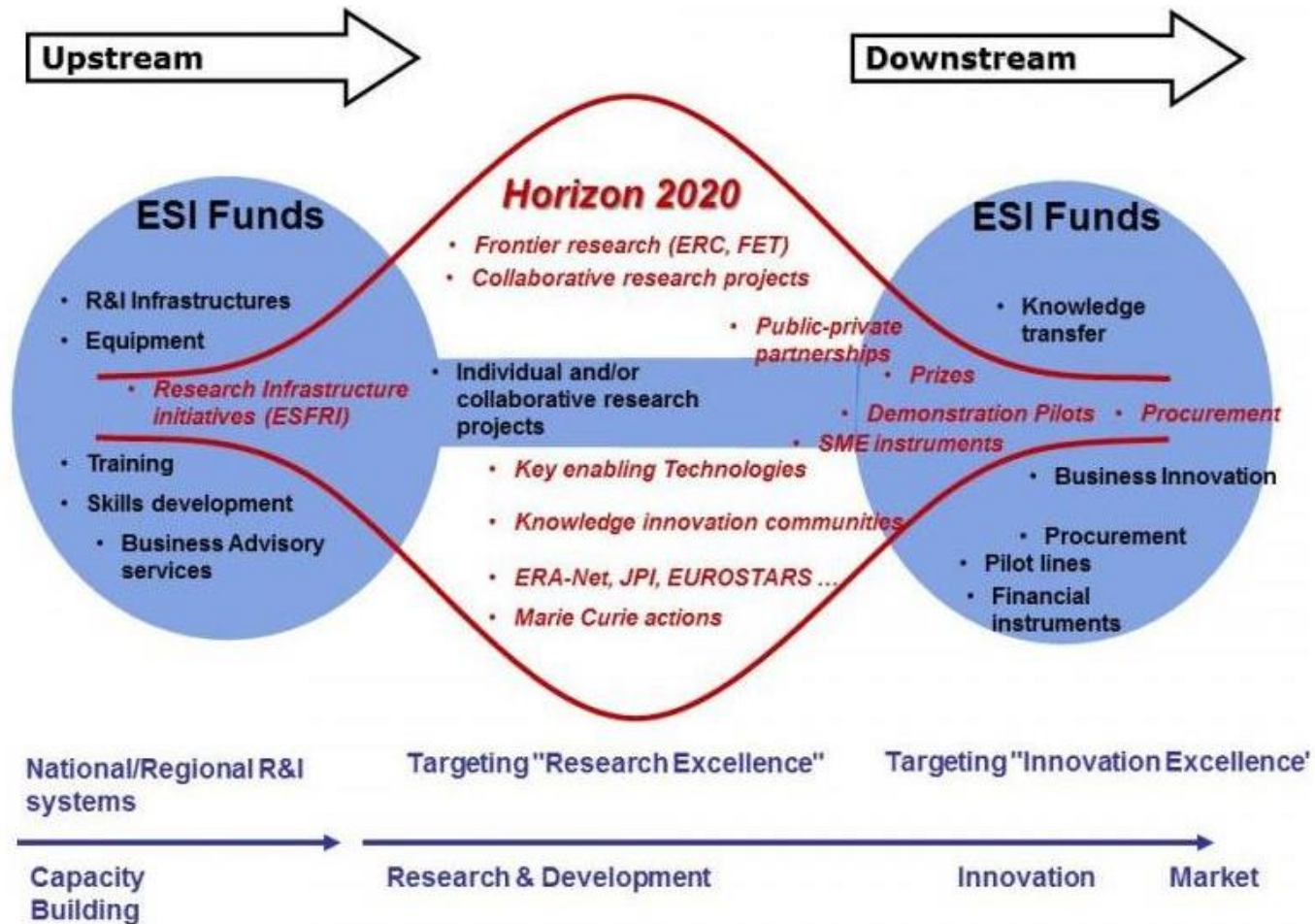


Source: JRC/IPTS

# Four potential cases of combined funding (2014 COM Guide on Synergies):

- 1. Joint or simultaneous funding:** Different funding sources in the same project e.g. H2020 money and ESIF used together to fund different cost items within a single project. ESIF could also be used for some "complementary" funding (cost items eligible under ESIF but not under H2020).
- 2. Sequential funding:** separate successive and legally/financially not linked projects with alternating H2020 or ESIF support. This is an easier way to combine funds with less risk of (involuntarily) creating double funding scenarios. Sequential funding can go in both directions: capacity building (e.g. raising readiness to participate in H2020) and/or innovation exploitation (e.g. exploitation of H2020 results, learning tools, cooperation models etc. developed in Erasmus+). Funding of one phase does not guarantee a funding of the subsequent phase.
- 3. Additional/parallel funding:** ESIF money is not directly linked to a H2020 project, but a regional/national authority decides to fund a project to enhance the impact of a H2020 R+I project or Erasmus+ or COSME in its region (i.e. skills development or capacity building or for amplifying the impact of Joint Technology Initiatives).
- 4. Alternative funding:** ESIF money could be used for project proposals with a positive evaluation under H2020 or Erasmus+ that could not be funded due to a lack of H2020 funds under the call (i.e. SME instrument projects from a single country / projects submitted under the Fast Track to Innovation pilot scheme). These proposals could be **reoriented** towards ESIF requirements and submitted at national/regional level, if this type and topic of project fits into the OPs of the concerned territories.

# S2E Rationale & Case Studies



# S2E Web

## Objectives & Activities of S2E

The **Stairway to Excellence (S2E)** project aims to support EU13 regions and countries in developing and exploiting the synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), Horizon 2020 (H2020) and other EU funding programmes:

- Assist them in closing the innovation gap, in order to promote excellence in all regions and EU countries;
- Stimulate the early and effective implementation of national and regional Smart Specialisation Strategies.

[More info](#)

## Country & Region Information

Quantitative and qualitative information is produced for EU13 countries and regions:

National and Regional Fact & Figures aim to draw the European profile of a country/ region with statistical and financial information coming from the EU's 7th Framework Programme and Structural Funds dedicated to research and innovation.

S2E Country Reports will soon provide further analysis on selected policy issues that affect optimal use and the combination of key EU funds for R&I and offer country-tailored policy suggestions aiming to tackle the weaknesses identified in the analysis.



## Synergies examples

## Events & News

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** S2E is organizing National Events in all EU13 Member States to:

- Ease understanding of national and regional innovation ecosystems
- Raise awareness to enable synergies between EU funding programmes
- Share experiences in combining Structural Funds and Framework Programme to improve excellence
- Draw lessons for the future and identify follow-up actions to enhance potential synergies

- 30 Oct: **LITHUANIA National Event** ([more info here](#))

- 20 Nov: **ROMANIA National Event** ([more info soon](#))

More **upcoming S3P and other events** of interest can be consulted [here](#).

**PAST S2E EVENTS:**

- 25 Jun 2015: **SLOVAKIA National Event** in Bratislava
- 15 Apr 2015: **LATVIA National Event** in Riga
- 26 Mar 2015: **CROATIA National Event** in Zagreb
- 2-3 Oct 2014: **S2E Launching conference** in Prague

**NEWS** (see also the *S3 Newsletter*)

- **News!** Call for contribution: the S2E team invites contributions to be presented at the forthcoming national S2E events or the final S2E conference.
- Facts and Figures are now available for all EU13 and Country Reports are about to be published too
- The S3 Working Papers No 09/2015 was published on External dimensions of smart specialisations: Opportunities and challenges for trans-regional and transnational cooperation in EU13
- Joint Statements were published after the Croatia national event and Latvia national event and another one is being released after the Slovakia national event

# S2E Web

Synergies examples will be provided in which SF/ ESIF and FP7/H2020 funds have been combined in order to amplify the R&I investments and their impact, using different forms of innovation and competitiveness support, or carrying innovative ideas further along the innovation cycle or value chain to bring them to the market.

## Instruments, Platforms & Concepts

Fiches will be made available on a selection of European instruments/ platforms/ concepts that can be considered as facilitators especially for "downstream activities", to exploit and diffuse results from earlier programming period (FP7) and current one (H2020), and as key elements in monitoring the implementation of synergies in their various forms.

## FAQs

Replies are provided to questions related to practical application of the Guidance on synergies between ESIF, Horizon2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes.

A list of acronyms is also available.

## Contact Points

Contact the S2E at [JRC-IPTS-S2E@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-IPTS-S2E@ec.europa.eu)

S2E Team members

Links to lists of H2020 National Contact Points and European Enterprise Network branches available from the contact pages of Member States registered on S3P

## Other Relevant Information

We are gathering references related/ relevant to Cohesion Policy and the synergies with the research and development funds, including:

- **Reference Documents:** guidance for Policy-Makers, Implementing Bodies and Beneficiaries of EU Funds and instruments issued by the European Commission or other bodies, including:

- Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes



- **Related Links,** mainly to the Smart Specialisation Platform (S3P)

- **Relevant Initiatives, Projects and Platforms,** as there are more and more of these, for example aiming at:

- providing advisory services on financial instruments (e.g. FI\_COMPASS)
- encouraging a better exploitation of European research and innovation programmes and participation in the ERA (e.g. MIRRIS)
- facilitating trans-national co-operation between NCPs (e.g. NCP\_WIDE.NET)
- exploring the benefits of space technologies (e.g. NEREUS) and other sectors for Regions and their citizens and to spread their applications
- providing support for the Public-Public-Partnerships (e.g. ERA-LEARN 2020)
- etc.

## S2E Publications



National and Regional Fact & Figures are available for EU13 countries and regions (S2E Country reports will soon be available for all EU13).



As an outcome of its Launching conference, S2E published the Policy Brief 12/2014 in Dec 2014 : Synergies between EU R&I Funding Programmes. Proceedings from the Launching Event of the Stairway to Excellence Project

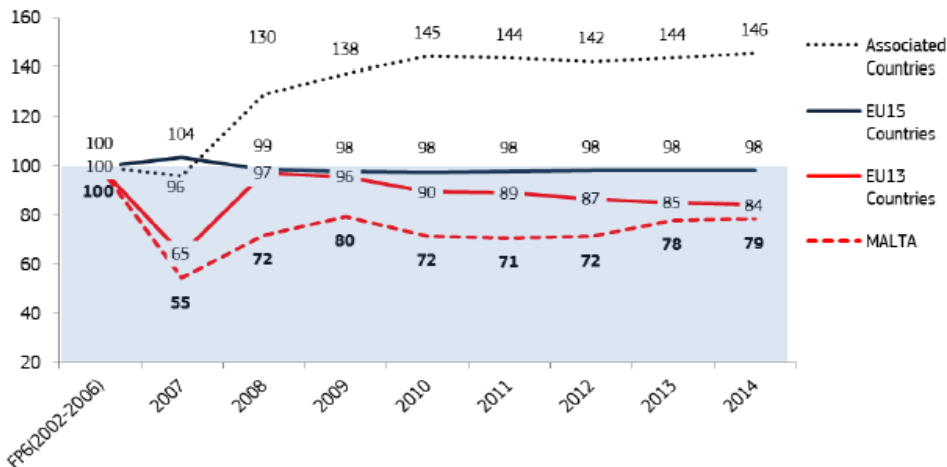
# S2E Facts and Figures

Stairway to excellence  
Cohesion Policy and the Synergies with the  
Research and Innovation Funds

## POLAND Facts & Figures



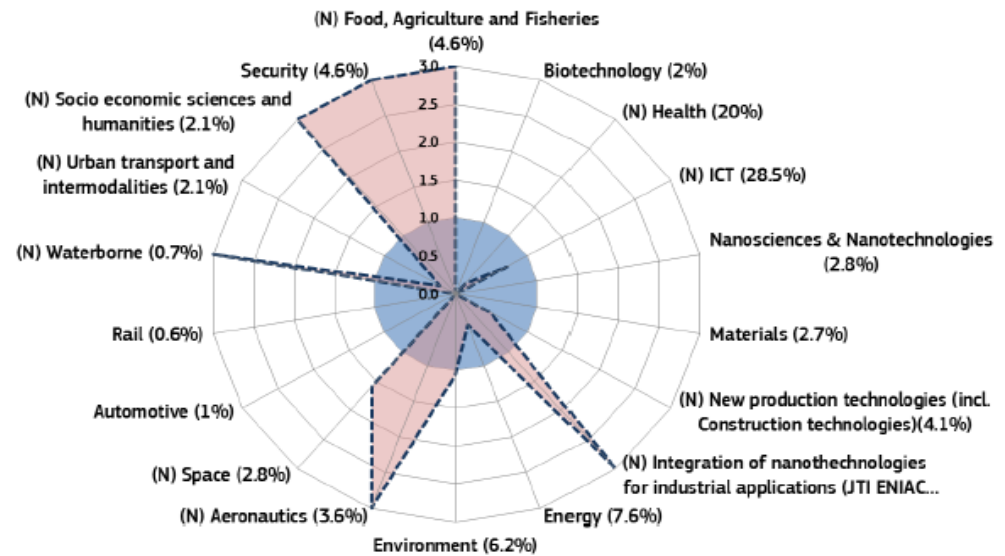
Figure 1 : Evolution of the Share of EU FP contribution received between 2006 and 2014 (EU FP6 bud share taken as base 100)



Source: JRC-IPTS calculated using data FP6 and FP7 contract database-June 2014














Figure 4: S&T specialisation areas according to the EU Contribution received by FP7 participants

- Framework programme 7 (% of FP7 budget dedicated to cooperation programme in the area)
- MALTA
- (N): National smart specialisation area chosen



Source: data: FP7 contracts database-June 2014, processed by JRC-IPTS

# S2E Country Reports

Country	National Facts & Figures	Regional Information	S2E Country Report
 BULGARIA	<a href="#">BG Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">BG Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">BG Country Report</a>
 CROATIA	<a href="#">HR Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">HR Country Report</a>
 CYPRUS	<a href="#">CY Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">CY Country Report</a>
 CZECH REPUBLIC	<a href="#">CZ Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">CZ Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">CZ Country Report</a>
 ESTONIA	<a href="#">EE Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">EE Country Report</a>
 HUNGARY	<a href="#">HU Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">HU Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">HU Country Report</a>
 LATVIA	<a href="#">LV Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">LV Country Report</a>
 LITHUANIA	<a href="#">LT Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">LT Country Report</a>
 MALTA	<a href="#">MT Facts &amp; Figures</a>	n/a	<a href="#">MT Country Report</a>
 POLAND	<a href="#">PL Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">PL Regional Facts &amp; figures</a>	<a href="#">PL Country Report</a>
 ROMANIA	<a href="#">RO Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">RO Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">RO Country Report</a>
 SLOVAKIA	<a href="#">SK Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">SK Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">SK Country Report</a>
 SLOVENIA	<a href="#">SI Facts &amp; Figures</a>	<a href="#">SI Regional Annex</a>	<a href="#">SI Country Report</a>

# S2E Country Reports

- **Chapter 1** includes introductory remarks, outlining the background of the “*Stairway to Excellence*” project.
- **Chapter 2** discusses the governance of the R&I system, presenting institutions involved in design and implementation of SF in 2007-2013 and European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for the 2014-2020 perspective.
- **Chapter 3** further explores factors that support or limit national participation in R&I calls funded by ESIF, pointing to shortcomings such as: imperfect design of some support measures, ambiguity surrounding co-funding requirements for certain projects and cost eligibility, as well as managerial capacities of applicant organisations, including specific cases of public universities and public research institutes. It also discusses the capacities of funding agencies and steps taken to reduce administrative burdens at the ESIF application and implementation stages in 2014-2020.
- **Chapter 4** outlines reasons for limited participation of Polish organisations in FP7 and Horizon 2020 (H2020 actions), referring to: competition with other, nationally available funding opportunities, personnel lack certain skills (including limited command of English and limited international contacts), only marginal involvement in H2020 programming and lack of adequate representation of Polish interests in Brussels, demotivating salary and intellectual property rights (IPR) regulations in H2020, and insufficient academic recognition of researchers managing externally funded R&I projects.



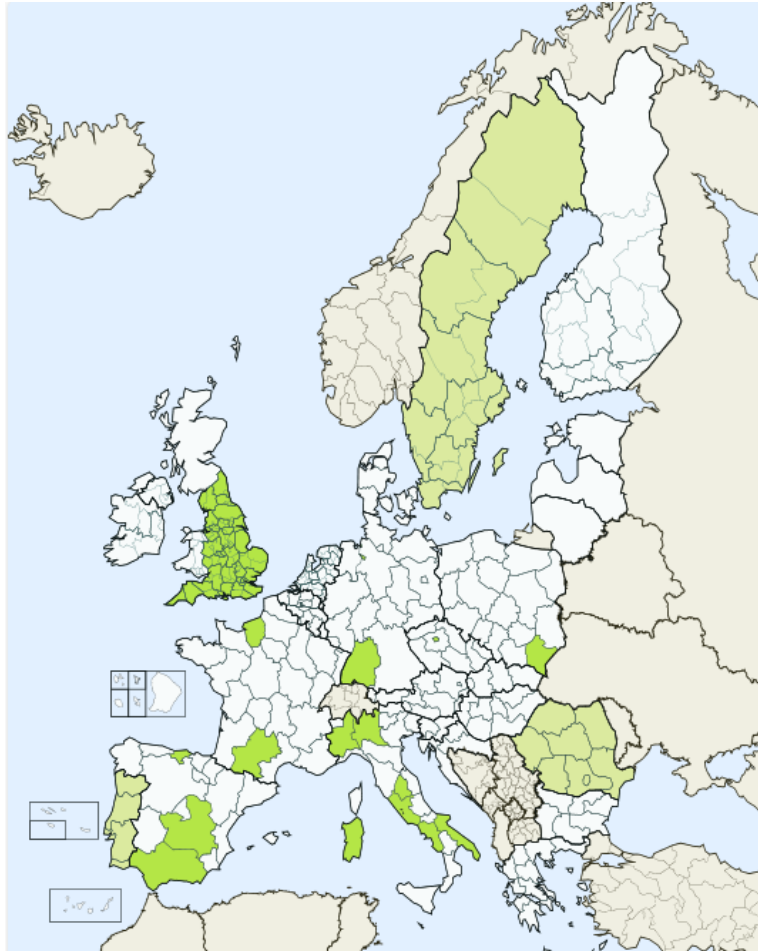
# S2E Country Reports

- **Chapter 5** presents policy instruments, which facilitate the participation in ESIF and FP7/H2020, outlining support for applicants, activities of the National Contact Point, financial support for FP7/H2020 project proponents, governmental plans to establish a dedicated contact point and funding for H2020 application drafting by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the *“Pact for Horizon 2020”*, signed by the Ministry of Science and Education with universities and research institutes, including reciprocal commitments intended to increase the Polish participation in H2020.
- In **chapter 6**, experiences with evaluation and monitoring of ESIF are described, demonstrating the limited role of international evaluators and shortcomings in evaluation criteria used for some support measures. It also discusses the policy learning based on ESIF monitoring mechanisms and positive changes in the wake of the 2014-2020 ESIF perspective.
- **Chapter 7** lists factors, which limit the synergies between ESIF and H2020, including: differences in legal frameworks, H2020 salary regulations demotivating researchers from Polish public universities and research institutes, and H2020 IPR regulations considered as problematic by some innovative SMEs, challenges in using research infrastructures established with ESIF funding, organisational barriers including accounting and auditing practices discouraging high-risk innovative projects, as well as the evolving design of Poland's ESIF support measures, as a dedicated measure intended to increase the H2020 readiness of SMEs was eliminated from Poland's operational programme. The subsequent discussion of factors supporting the synergies points to multiple support measures, directly complementing the funding available from FP7/H2020, including examples of parallel funding ( *“TEAM”*, local support for KIC co-location centres), simultaneous/cumulative funding ( *“IDEAS FOR POLAND”*, and two dedicated measures included in 2014-2020 ESIF: *“International Research Agendas”*, complementing *H2020 Teaming*, and *“Virtual Research Institutes”*, adding value to *H2020 Twinning*), alternative funding ( *“Ideas Plus”*), as well as the ease of securing sequential funding to combine multiple funding sources and ensure continuity of research efforts. Importantly, synergies are not only found between FP7/H2020 and SF/ESIF, but also involve multiple support
- **Chapter 8** offers insights into the take-up of public sector research results, discussing available support measures and providing examples of successful commercialisation of research results.
- **Chapter 9** includes a detailed list of policy suggestions, concerning: (a) strengthening of ESIF-H2020 synergies, (b) improvement of R&I support in Poland, and (c) actions to be taken by the European Commission to better serve the EU member states and contribute to their innovative development.
- **Chapter 10** summarizes the factors behind different regional levels of participation in FP7 and SF, presenting divergences in R&I performance, which influence the levels of R&D investment and applications for external funding.

# Case Studies

S&T Theme	Type of synergies	Country	Synergy Example	Abstract
Biotechnology	Parallel Funding	MT	<b>Development of capacity at the University of Malta</b>	This example considers the case of synergies achieved by the University of Malta through participation in two projects, one funded through ERDF funds and the other funded through the FP7 Capacities Programme....
Biotechnology; Health	Sequential Funding	HR	<b>Ruđer Bošković Institute (RBI)</b>	The case study outlines upstream sequential type of synergies developed at the Ruđer Bošković Institute in Zagreb, Croatia in the research area of biomedicine. The IPA project „Creation of research related ...
Biotechnology; Health; NMP	Sequential Funding	CZ	<b>Central European Institute of Technology (CEITEC)</b>	CEITEC is a research centre in the fields of life sciences, advanced materials and technologies having the aim to catalyse the existing research resources in South Moravia and establish itself through ....
Biotechnology; ICT	Sequential + Parallel Funding	PL	<b>Molecular scissors for double stranded RNA - International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, Prof. Janusz Bujnicki's team</b>	The resourceful combination of funding from national sources with Structural Funds (SF) and Framework Programme 7 (FP7) allowed the research team of Prof. Janusz Bujnicki to make breakthrough ...

# Eye@RIS3



- Research & Innovation Capabilities
- Business Areas & Target Market
- EU Priority

## EU Priority

Aeronautics & space

Select

Aeronautics & space

Blue growth

Cultural & creative industries

Digital Agenda

Nature & biodiversity

KETs

Public health & security

Service innovation

Social innovation

Sustainable innovation

Specific local policy priority

# COM Survey on Synergies Preliminary Results

- All the OPs, both regional and national, refer to the synergies and being open to synergies with different programmes related to RDI.
- Synergies is considered slightly more in relation to upstream activities than downstream activities: 87% of total OPs refer to upstream actions while it is 73% for downstream actions. Downstream actions are relatively more prominent for the national OPs (84.2%)
- Reference to the *alignment of costs models is low*. Only 14.5% of the OPs refer to this dimension. It is even lower for the regional OPs (11%)
- The "cross border cooperation" & "critical mass" are mentioned by half of the OPs.
- Participation of experts for other programmes in the Monitoring Committees is at 65.5%. It reaches 100% for the national OPs.
- Investment Priorities 1a and 1b are the most common priorities; 91% for IP-1b and 60% for IP-1a. These are followed by IP-3a (40%).
  - IP-1a: *strengthening RTDI by R&I infrastructure and capacity development*
  - IP-1b: *strengthening RTDI by promoting business investment and developing links between different entities*
  - IP-3a: *enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs*

# National S2E Events

- A better understanding of the national innovation ecosystem
- Raising awareness of the actions needed to enable synergies between different EU funding programmes
- Sharing experiences in combining different EU funds

The events are open to national and regional MAs, NCPs, national authorities in charge of RIS3, selected experts and representatives from business and research organisations.

Croatia (March 2015)

Latvia (April 2015)

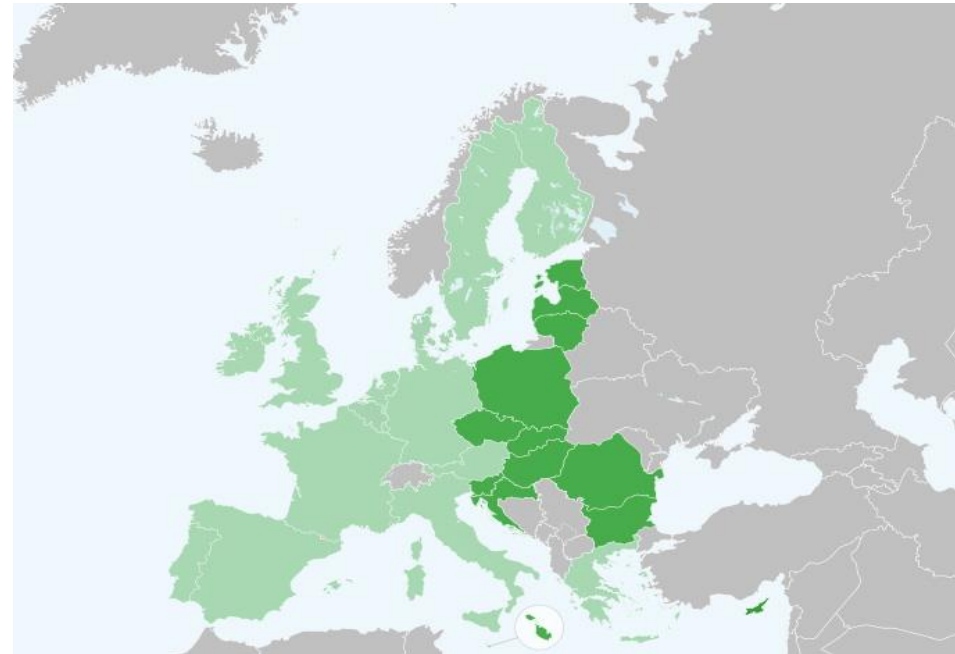
Slovakia (June 2015)

Malta (S3 Workshop July 2015)

*Forthcoming Events:*

*Lithuania, Romania, Czech Republic, Estonia*

➤ ***Joint Statement of the National Event***



# Joint Statements



Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra

## JOINT STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EVENT OF LATVIA "The Synergies with Research and Innovation Funds"

*organised by*

European Commission, Joint Research Centre (Stairway to Excellence Initiative)

Latvian State Education Development Agency

15 April 2015, Riga-Latvia

1. Consensus for Better Coordination & New Opportunities
2. Upstream activities
3. Downstream activities
4. The Way Forward

*Key Issue 2: The need for improved research collaboration with the Central and Western European countries (EU15).*

**Potential Actions:** e.g. enhancing the network & learning (and adapting) from good practices across Europe.

**Key Issue 5:** Low rate of participation in international research collaboration  
**Key Issue 6:** Long-term availability (sustainability) of ESIF

**Potential Actions:** e.g. establishment of incubation centres, enhanced autonomy for public universities, institute-dedicated budget, alignment of national funds and performance-based funding.

# Thank you!



<http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

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