

Building research excellence in EU convergence and outermost regions - the Research Potential experience

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Dr. Stefan WEIERS
Programme Co-ordinator
European Commission
Directorate General "Research and Innovation"





Research Potential- What it is about ?

- **Unlock *the full research potential* of the EU by building excellence in the *EU convergence* and *outermost regions* by a coherent package of measures**
- **Upgrade research *capacity and capabilities***
- **better connect *excellent and promising* research entities from these regions to ERA and EU research activities**
- **Stimulate *regional socio-economic development* by harnessing research entities as *innovation engines***



Implementation

➤ **Research Potential** supports the implementation of an **Action Plan** defined by the applicant, derived from its **SWOT analysis**, composed by a coherent set measures:

➤ **Twinning** > Exchange of know-how and experience (secondments) + Organisation of workshops & conferences

➤ **Recruitment** of experienced researchers

➤ **Upgrading or acquisition of research equipment**

➤ **IPR management** and innovation capacity building *since 2012-2013

➤ **Optional ex-post evaluation for RTD sustainable strategy**

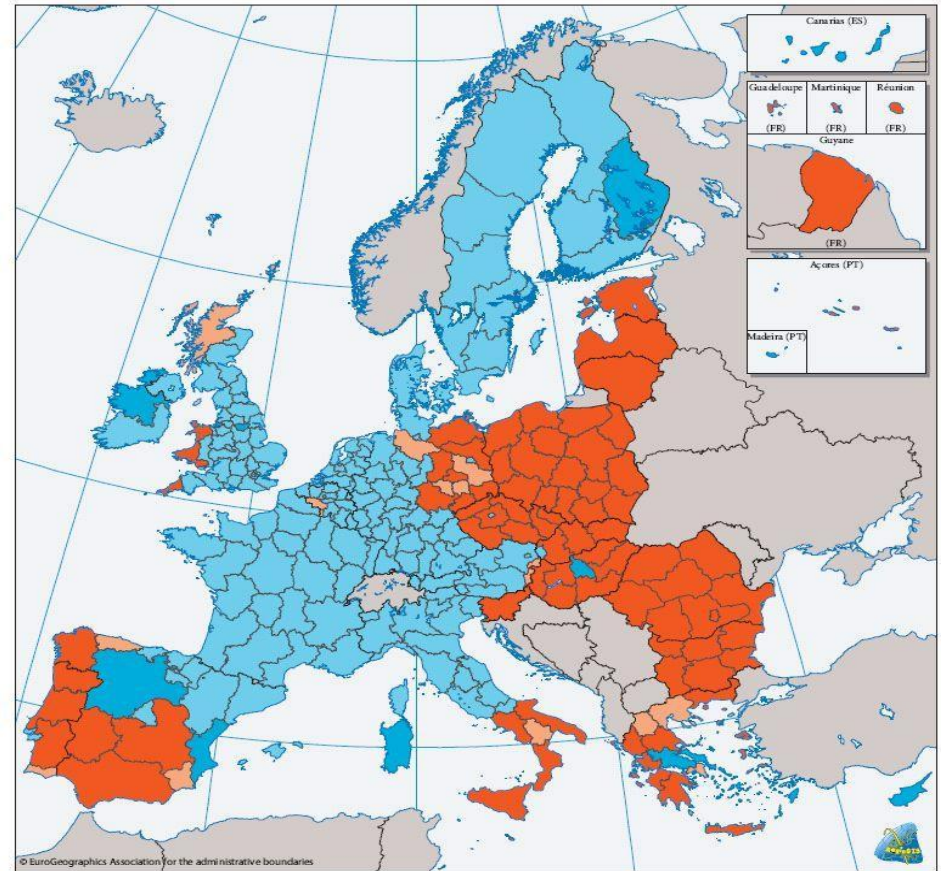




CONVERGENCE REGIONS

eligible for financing by the Structural Funds (2007-2013) under objective

« convergence » - whose per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is less than 75 % of the average GDP of the EU-25



**Structural Funds 2007- 2013:
Convergence and Regional Competitiveness Objectives**

- Convergence Regions
- Phasing-out Regions
- Phasing-in Regions
- Competitiveness and Employment Regions

Position as of October 2006.



- Budget for **2007-2013** period: **340 M€**
 - The EC financial contribution per selected project can be **up to EUR 5 million** (as from 2012)
- The EC financial contribution may reach a max. of **100% of eligible costs** – Support Actions
- Duration of projects: **up to 36 months** (+ 6 additional months if ex-post evaluation facility is included)

Research Potential – Milestones of programme development

- 2009 – **up-scaling** of project size and financial allocation up to 4 MEURO, merger of evaluation facility into main call
- 2010 – tighter conditions for significant size and involvement of **partnering organisation**
- 2011 – report from expert group **on impact assessment** of Research Potential
- 2012-2013 - **up-scaling of budget** up to 5 MEURO and mandatory inclusion of innovation related actions (**IPR management and innovation capacity building**),
 - simplification by joining workshops, conferences and exchange of knowledge into a single twinning package



Research Potential- major achievements

- **Entrance gate** for research groups from less favoured regions to EU FP7 research projects and networks
- Successful integration into **joint technology initiatives** and platforms
- Turning the tide from **brain drain to brain gain**
- Support of institutional transformation processes and **strategic positioning**
- **New infrastructure** acquisitions enabled catching up to cutting edge research and opened doors to industry co-operations
- **Sustainable partnerships** with top class research institutions at mutual benefit
- Strongly increased **visibility and recognition** via recurrent scientific events
- Contribution to balanced development of ERA
- **Quality seal** increasing competitiveness at national level
- Successful liaison with **regional stakeholders and industry**

Research Potential- challenges encountered

- High **oversubscription** led to disappointment and rejection of even excellent proposals
- **Attracting top class researchers** (back) to convergence regions sometimes difficult
- Challenge to **balance out** significant size of beneficiaries versus need of scientific focus and specialisation of excellent research groups EU FP7 research projects and networks
- Internal procedures within organisations sometimes hampering swift **procurement and recruitment procedures**
- **Synergies with cohesion** funds and national programmes took place but not systematically
- Opportunities for regional innovation, **IPR management, industry** involvement not always fully realised often depending on S&T domains
- **Relatively low response** from outermost regions



Research Potential - outlook

Within FP7

- Launch of the **last batch of projects** for FP7
- Valorisation of a large portfolio of 150 projects, networking, promotion success stories, increasing visibility
- **Knowledge transfer** into thematic programmes and regional policy

Beyond FP7

- build a **Stairways to Excellence** by using all available means for funding research and innovation enabling schemes (from research infrastructure to venture capital and financial support to start-ups and university spin-offs)
- Streamlining Research Potential (REGPOT) approach for future Cohesion policy, **transfer of objectives**
- Developing specific actions within **HORIZON 2020** such as ERA chairs and twinning schemes





Horizon 2020

What is Horizon 2020

- **Commission proposal for a 80 billion euro research and innovation funding programme (2014-2020)**
- **A core part of Europe 2020, Innovation Union & European Research Area:**
 - **Responding to the economic crisis** to invest in future jobs and growth
 - **Addressing people's concerns** about their livelihoods, safety and environment
 - **Strengthening the EU's global position** in research, innovation and technology

What's new

- **A single programme** bringing together three separate programmes/initiatives*
- **Coupling research to innovation** – from research to retail, all forms of innovation
- **Focus on societal challenges** facing EU society, e.g. health, clean energy and transport
- **Simplified access**, for all companies, universities, institutes in all EU countries and beyond.

*The 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7), innovation aspects of Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), EU contribution to the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Three priorities:

Excellent science (€24.5 billion)

Industrial leadership (€17.9 billion)

Societal challenges (€31.7 billion)

Priority 1. Excellent science

Why:

- World class science is the foundation of tomorrow's technologies, jobs and well-being
- Europe needs to develop, attract and retain research talent
- Researchers need access to the best infrastructures

Priority 2. Industrial leadership

Why:

- Strategic investments in key technologies (e.g. advanced manufacturing, micro-electronics) underpin innovation across existing and emerging sectors
- Europe needs to attract more private investment in research and innovation
- Europe needs more innovative SMEs to create growth and jobs

Priority 3. Societal challenges

Why:

- Concerns of citizens and society/EU policy objectives (climate, environment, energy, transport etc) cannot be achieved without innovation
- Breakthrough solutions come from multi-disciplinary collaborations, including social sciences & humanities
- Promising solutions need to be tested, demonstrated and scaled up

Simplification

- **Single set of** simpler and more coherent participation rules
- New **balance between trust and control**
- Moving from several **funding rates** for different beneficiaries and activities to just two
- Replacing the four methods to calculate overhead or «indirect costs» with a **single flat rate**
- Major simplification under the **forthcoming financial regulation**
- **Successful applicants to get working more quickly:** reduction of average time to grant

Specific measures in Horizon 2020 to close the innovation divide

- Improved information, communication and support
- Stimulating cross-border science networks
- ERA (European Research Area) Chairs
- Teaming/Twinning of research institutions



Cohesion Policy



What is EU Cohesion Policy?

- A framework for financing a wide range of projects and investments with the aim of encouraging economic growth and social cohesion in EU member states and their regions.
- Biggest slice of the EU budget: proposed budget: €376 billion
- Allocation of funds from Cohesion policy will be linked to the Europe 2020 objectives for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
- Strengthened partnership between Commission and Member States and regions and local communities

R&I Investment priorities for ERDF (2014-20)

Objectives:

- Enhance research and innovation infrastructure (R&I) and capacities to develop R&I excellence and promoting centres of competence
- Promote business R&I investment, product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation and public service application, demand simulation, networking and clusters
- Budget (expected): More or less €60-80 billion (expected)
- Thematic concentration: R&I, SME, low carbon economy + 4th (e.g. ICT, energy, climate)
- This will have to be conducted via Smart Specialisation Strategies

What is Smart Specialisation?

- A strategic approach to economic development through targeted support to Research and Innovation;
- A process of developing a vision, identifying competitive advantage, setting strategic priorities and making use of smart policies to maximise the knowledge-based development potential of any region (strong or weak, high-tech or low-tech);
- Concentrates resources on a small number of thematic priorities
- Stresses role for all regions in the knowledge economy, through identification of comparative advantages in specific R & I domains/clusters (not just winning sectors);
- Challenges: Smart specialisation has to embrace the concept of open innovation, not only investment in (basic) research.
- See also: http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/publication_en.cfm

Synergies between Horizon 2020 and Cohesion Policy

HORIZON 2020



Cohesion Policy



EU R&D Policy – future Horizon 2020	EU Cohesion Policy
Differences	
non-territorial approach	place-based approach
Based mainly on individual R&D Projects (potentially co-funding activities of programmes) tackling the whole cycle of innovation	Based on multiannual Programmes aiming at increased competitiveness through close to the market competitive R&D and innovation efforts
In general awarded directly to final beneficiaries public and private R&D centres, universities or research funding organisations	Awarded through shared management to national and regional public intermediaries
Mostly competitive calls addressed to international groupings (exception ERC and MC that also address individuals) through peer-review based on excellence criteria	Non competitive attribution addressed to regional players based on strategic planning negotiation
Complementarities	
Horizon 2020 will focus on tackling major societal challenges, maximising the competitiveness impact of research and innovation and raising and spreading levels of excellence in the research base	Cohesion policy will act as a capacity building instrument via smart specialisation, based on learning mechanisms and critical skills in regions and Member States. Staircase to Excellence: increasing capacity to participate in Horizon 2020.

Thank you !

