



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ  
Εθνικόν και Καποδιστριακόν  
Πανεπιστήμιον Αθηνών  
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# Synergies: all aspects

*Mutual Learning Exercise on  
National Practices in Widening Participation and Strengthening Synergies  
under the Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility*

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# Outline

- ▶ Background (types of synergies and types of barriers)
- ▶ Main messages from the ‘Structured Dialogue’ and ‘Synergies at Operational level’
- ▶ Main messages from ‘Synergies at Strategic level’
- ▶ Overview of good practices
- ▶ Lessons learned

# Stylised facts

	ESIF	FPs
Mission	Convergence (place-based budget distribution)	Excellence-based budget distribution
EU Budget appropriations €	43.7 bn	80 bn
Distribution mechanisms	Major role by MAs (in partnership with the Commission and cooperation with national institutions)	Major role Commission services
Implementation	MAs and intermediaries implement programmes	European Commission
Support activities, facilitators (information, awareness raising etc.)	MAs and intermediaries	NCPs, ERA support mechanisms, ministries, agencies, intermediaries
Final recipients	Research and innovation teams (direct beneficiaries or following competitive calls)	Research and Innovation teams following competitive calls
Accounting rules	ESIF plus national rules	FP plus (occasionally) national rules

# History of synergies

- ▶ Good to have
- ▶ Suggestions, reports, examples
- ▶ A clear mandate
- ▶ Systematic efforts from the EU side (relaxing rules in the past and on-going)

After that Policy Makers at national and regional level started trying

# Taxonomies

## Using the combination of funding

- ▶ Sequential funding (upstream or downstream)
- ▶ Parallel funding (separate but mutually supportive projects)
- ▶ Simultaneous/cumulative funding (supporting the same project)
- ▶ Alternative funding (Seal of Excellence)

## Using the policy content

- ▶ Effective and Structured Dialogue (at national level)
- ▶ Strategy and policy design
- ▶ Common operations

# Barriers (real and perceived)

- ▶ State Aid rules (type and magnitude)
- ▶ Reluctance to experiment (GBER unintended effects: “total new GBER cases as % of total new cases with reported expenditure amounting to 90%” and the corresponding “total GBER cases as % of total cases with reported expenditure” rsign from 50% in 2010 to 80% in 2016)
- ▶ Accounting for economic activities by publicly funded research centres
- ▶ Differences in accounting rules
- ▶ Uncoordinated timing
- ▶ Legal uncertainty (precautionary *principle/attitude*)
- ▶ Silos may be very powerful in individual countries (legal framework; origin; age; hierarchy; scope; share of funding; overall governance efficiency)

# Effective and Structured dialogue: strong cases

Good practices need time, persistence and synergies “champions”

- ▶ Ireland has organized coordination and consultations for a long time; in this process focus has become a key ingredient (thanks partly to an external impetus at the beginning); individual organisations accept conditions of synergies
- ▶ Germany has started an encompassing dialogue more recently; its merit is in building up on individual success stories
- ▶ Austria has adopted an “alignment” strategy

# Effective and Structured dialogue: building blocks

Breaking silos can start with small, individual steps

- ▶ Estonia: A network of advisers, a person in every ministry forming a group in their own right
- ▶ Spanish: Network of RTDI policies
- ▶ Sweden: Co-location of NCPs (h2020) in Vinnova (ESIF and H2020)
- ▶ Slovak Republic: Joint O.P. responsibility
- ▶ Czech Republic: Co-design of O.P.s (R&D vs Education and Competitiveness)
- ▶ Wales and Catalonia: synergies at regional level (information and linkages from the start)



# Strategy and Policy

Strategic initiatives have multiplied both under

- ▶ H2020 (JU, EIT)
- ▶ and under ESIF (RIS3, S2E)

# Joint Undertakings (JTIs, ERA-NETs, Art. 185,

- ▶ Coordination
- ▶ Co-funding (top up)

ESIF can be used to join but is excluded from co-funding; the solution is using national funds or EIB national loans to complement for lacking national funding

ESIF can be used for JPI joint calls

# JU good practices: combine for common goal

- ▶ MSCA Cofund
- ▶ Flanders Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant
- ▶ CleanSky2 Czech republic
- ▶ BONUS: Joint Baltic Sea
- ▶ EIT:
  - Climate KIC: simultaneous decision ot use ESIF as sequential project
  - Estonia use ESIF for pre-EIT linkages

# ESIF coordination initiatives

- ▶ RIS 3 (worked best in experienced regions)
- ▶ S2E (examples mostly linear)
- ▶ Macro-regional strategies: Difficulties of multi-country coordination (Good practice: Danube:Future)

# Synergies at operational level

- ▶ Seal of Excellence
- ▶ ERC (SoE type)
- ▶ Cumulative funding
- ▶ MSCA COFUND
- ▶ Interreg
- ▶ EIB/EFSI: potential linear synergies through Jeremy and successors; no good practice with InnovFin as yet, timing and difference of mentality is a main barrier
- ▶ Upstream and Downstream synergies: the easy but incidental approach (with the exception of explicit criteria)

# Seal of Excellence: barriers and good practices

State aid barrier for Phase 2 (and Phase 1 if the selected company is above the threshold)

Good practice:

- ▶ use de minimis for Phase 1
- ▶ VINNOVA Runner Up Programme
- ▶ Mind-map (CDTI-enterprise Ireland and Tekes) guide and building up a stronger case
- ▶ Estonia ERC (SoE-type support)

# Cumulative funding

- ▶ Facilitated through new regulation (inertia to capture the new rules?)
- ▶ Appropriate for large-scale projects (ELI) and committed, self-motivated research teams

Type of Synergies wished for	Barriers to eliminate	Indicative good practices
<p><b>Effective and Structured Dialogue</b></p>	<p>Eliminate all perceived barriers of safeguarding turf; Overcome short-termism and invest in long term silo breaking</p>	<p>Ireland: long term effort; start with national funds; explicit criteria of ESIF funding for applicants to succeed in leveraging FP Austria: organised platform of cooperation for FP and ESIF Germany: Introduction of systematic interaction Examples of shared O.P. responsibility, co-location and systematic networking paving the way to silo breaking (Estonia, Sweden, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Spain)</p>



Type of Synergies wished for	Barriers to eliminate	Indicative good practices
<p data-bbox="206 358 784 501"><b>Synergies through strategy and policy</b></p> <ol data-bbox="206 508 733 876" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="206 508 494 572">1. S3/S2E</li> <li data-bbox="206 579 366 644">2. JU</li> <li data-bbox="206 651 384 715">3. EIT</li> <li data-bbox="206 722 733 876">4. Macro-regional strategies</li> </ol>	<p data-bbox="945 358 1574 494">Overcome reluctance and risk aversion</p> <p data-bbox="945 501 1480 572">Coordinate timing</p> <p data-bbox="945 579 1352 651">Ensure top up</p>	<ol data-bbox="1691 358 2384 1408" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1691 358 2384 793">1. S3/S2E: EU examples in the Regulation for linear actions; JRC sites with examples, mostly of linear nature</li> <li data-bbox="1691 801 2384 1179">2. JU: Clean Sky (Andalucía, Czech republic), ECSEL; BBEU Flanders; EIB loans</li> <li data-bbox="1691 1186 2384 1336">3. EIT: Use ESIF to keep contact; Climate KIC</li> <li data-bbox="1691 1343 2226 1408">4. Macro-regional:</li> </ol>

### Strategy at operational level

1. Seal of Excellence
2. ERC
3. Cumulative funding and cost models
4. COFUND
5. Interreg
6. EIB/EFSI
7. Linear synergies (explicitly or incidentally linking ESIF with FP success)

### Barriers

1. State Aid
2. No specific instruments available
3. Clarity and multi-audits
4. Separation of funding
5. Lack of ESIF funds for internationalisations
6. Limited possibilities
7. Lack of time congruence

1. SMEs Vinnova Runner Up Programme; Lombardy Vouchers for Phase 2; CDTI Horizonte PYME under de minimis; SoE MSCA: Sweden
2. ERC: Estonia, preparatory ESIF support for increasing ERC success
3. Clarification of rules by the regulations; introduction of simultaneous/cumulative funding possibilities; BBEU Flanders; IICT Bulgaria, Nanotech Slovenia
4. COFUND: Examples by EU documents; SoCoMo; EDGE
5. International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory, SCREEN (MoU for synergies)
6. EIB: Loans to bridge the matching funds barriers; InnovFin; Jeremy; Nord pas de Calais
7. Individual success stories: Conditional ESIF approvals; South Ostrobothnia region; City of Leeuwarden in Fryslan Linking ESIF with FP success: criteria for eligibility in Ireland RCs and Estonian ESFRI; there is a very large number of linear, incidental successes of limited value for the

# Lessons learned

A new taxonomy

- ▶ The indifferent way
- ▶ The easy way:
- ▶ The challenging way

Or

- ▶ Dynamic synergies (breaking silos, explicit linking of the two funding sources)
- ▶ Targeted synergies (strategic, and operational-linked)
- ▶ Incidental

# Lessons learned (cont.)

- ▶ The real value of synergies is to address them as a long-term, systematic value extraction.
- ▶ There are many ways to target synergies rather than expect them to arise
- ▶ Targeted synergies are more likely to appear if and when ESIF incentives are conditional for leveraging external resources
- ▶ Minimise lack of security (interpretation rules)
- ▶ Eliminate multiple audits
- ▶ (synchronise timing e.g. ESIF/InnovFin direct support)