

AMCER

ADVANCED MONITORING AND COORDINATION OF EU R&D POLICIES AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/18

Policy Framework Analysis
R&D and innovation in the Framework
of the 2014-2020 European programming period

Annex to (Draft) Final Report | Version 28/09/2012

This report presents the interim results of a Targeted Analysis conducted within the framework of the ESPON 2013 Programme, partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

The partnership behind the ESPON Programme consists of the EU Commission and the Member States of the EU27, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. Each partner is represented in the ESPON Monitoring Committee.

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Policy Framework Analysis

R&D and innovation in the Framework of the 2014-2020 European programming period

1. The Europe 2020 strategy and the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative

The European Council adopted the Europe 2020 strategy in June 2010. The strategy is meant to set out “a vision of Europe’s social market economy for the 21st century” by putting forward three mutually reinforcing priorities¹:

- **Smart growth:** developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- **Sustainable growth:** promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- **Inclusive growth:** fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

These priorities are accompanied by headline targets the UE and its Member States set out to reach by 2020. Among these ambitions, the EU will seek to dedicate **3% of its GDP in R&D investment**². In order to underpin these objectives as well as to set up the framework for the necessary actions to be taken to fulfil them, the Commission has put forward seven flagship initiatives under each priority theme. The following table summarises each of the seven approved flagship initiatives.

Table 1 Flagship initiatives for the Europe 2020 strategy

Flagship initiative	Description
Innovation Union	Improve framework conditions and access to finance for research and innovation so as to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs.
Youth on the move	Enhance the performance of education systems and to facilitate the entry of young people to the labour market.
A digital agenda for Europe	Speed up the roll-out of high-speed internet and reap the benefits of a digital single market for households and firms.
Ressource-efficient Europe	Help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernise our transport sector and promote energy efficiency.
And industrial policy for the globalisation era	Improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally.
An agenda for new skills and jobs	Modernise labour markets and empower people by developing their of skills throughout the lifecycle with a view to increase labour participation and better match labour supply and demand, including through labour mobility.
European platform against poverty	Ensure social and territorial cohesion such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society.

Source: European Commission (2010)

¹ European Commission (2010a)

² The remaining objectives include: 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.

The Innovation Union flagship initiative was developed alongside the flagship initiative on a Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era, the Digital Agenda, Youth on the Move and the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs. In conjunction, these initiatives seek to improve conditions for innovation, including by accelerating the roll-out of high speed internet and its applications, by securing a strong industrial base, and by promoting excellent education systems, modern labour markets, and the right skills mix for Europe's future labour force³.

The Innovation Union Flagship sets out to develop a more integrated and strategic approach to innovation, in order to overcome some of Europe's more pressing challenges in the field (e.g. under-investment in the knowledge foundation, unsatisfactory framework conditions, fragmentation). In essence, reaching the Union will require: continued investment in education, R&D, innovation and ICTs; reforms to get more value for money and tackle fragmentation; modernising education systems at all levels; opening borders to researchers and innovators; simplifying access to EU programmes and enhancing their leverage effect on private sector investment; increasing the levels of innovation obtained from research; removing barriers to bringing ideas to the market; increasing European Innovation Partnerships; and exploiting Europe's strengths in design and creativity⁴.

In addition to the seven Flagship Initiatives, the Europe 2020 strategy will rely on a set of Integrated guidelines aimed at helping Member States develop their own strategies for sustainable growth. Within the first 6 guidelines, which are mostly economic in nature, the Commission has included 'Optimising support for R&D and innovation, strengthening the knowledge triangle and unleashing the potential of the digital economy'⁵.

2 Horizon 2020 – The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

Horizon 2020 is the successor of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. Alongside the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative, Horizon 2020 is expected to play a central role in achieving the objectives set forth by the Europe 2020 strategy in the field of research and innovation. The Programme brings together all EU research and innovation funding, including the Framework Programme for Research, the innovation-related activities of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (IET).

Some of the key novelties introduced by the programme include⁶:

- Major simplification through a simpler programme architecture, a single set of rules, less red tape through an easy to use cost reimbursement model, a single point of access for participants, less paperwork in preparing proposals, fewer controls and audits, with the overall aim to reduce the average time to grant by 100 days;

³ European Commission (2010b)

⁴ European Commission (2010b)

⁵ European Commission (2010a)

⁶ European Commission (2011b)

- An inclusive approach open to new participants, including those with ideas outside of the mainstream, ensuring that excellent researchers and innovators from across Europe and beyond can and do participate;
- The integration of research and innovation by providing seamless and coherent funding from idea to market;
- More support for innovation and activities close to the market, leading to a direct economic stimulus;
- A strong focus on creating business opportunities out of our response to the major concerns common to people in Europe and beyond, i.e. ‘societal challenges’;
- More possibilities for new entrants and young, promising scientists to put forward their ideas and obtain funding.

The programme focuses on three key priorities⁷, closely linked to those of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative:

1. **Excellent Science** aimed at raising the level of excellence in Europe's science base and ensuring a steady stream of world-class research to secure Europe's long-term competitiveness. This involves supporting the best ideas, developing talent within Europe, providing researchers with access to priority research infrastructure, and making Europe an attractive location for the world's best researchers.
2. **Industrial Leadership** aimed at making Europe a more attractive location to invest in research and innovation (including eco-innovation), by promoting activities where businesses set the agenda. This will involve providing major investment in key industrial technologies, maximising the growth potential of European companies by providing them with adequate levels of finance and help innovative SMEs to grow into world-leading companies.
3. **Societal Challenges** covering activities from research to market with a new focus on innovation-related activities, such as piloting, demonstration, test-beds, and support for public procurement and market uptake. It will include establishing links with the activities of the European Innovation Partnerships.

3 The Multi-annual Financial Framework and the draft legislative package framing the cohesion policy for the 2014-2020 period

3.1 The Multi-annual Financial Framework

The Commission presented its proposals on the Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-20 at the end of June 2011. It includes a total budget of €1,025 billion, representing a 3.2 percent increase compared to 2007-2013 or 5 % if the ‘outside MFF’ items are included. The main budget headings have been repackaged to emphasise Europe 2020 objectives (cf. 1), Cohesion policy and a new infrastructure fund (the ‘Connecting Europe facility’) being grouped into a sub-ceiling of the ‘Smart and inclusive growth’ heading⁸.

One of the main announced budgetary increases would take place in the field of R&D, innovation and education. According to the proposed budget, spending in these fields would increase by 48% to €115 billion compared to the current period. Existing research and innovation instruments would be regrouped under a Common

⁷ European Commission (2011b)

⁸ Mendez C, Bachtler J & Wisdale F (2011)

Strategic Framework - Horizon 2020 (cf. 2) -, concentrating on three priorities: i) excellence in the science base ii) tackling societal challenges iii) and creating industrial leadership and boosting competitiveness. Complementary investments would be received from the Structural Funds (at least €60 billion, as at present).

3.2 Cohesion policy and Structural Fund reform

The European Commission has also adopted a draft legislative package which will frame cohesion policy for 2014-2020. The first part of the proposal sets out common rules governing the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). It will increase coherence amongst the instruments for better synergies and greater impact. The second part sets out common rules governing the three main funds delivering the objectives of cohesion policy: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF)⁹.

The new proposals are meant to ensure that actions implemented under cohesion policy contribute to reaching the goals established by the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The following table summarises the main innovations introduced by the legislative proposal package in comparison to the currently existing legislative framework.

Innovation	Description
Linking allocation of funds to the Europe 2020 objectives	See 1.
Inviting member states to sign partnership contracts	These contracts would closely correspond to the National Reform Programmes that the member states have to develop and implement in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy. They would set out priorities for investment, allocation of resources and targets to be achieved.
Focusing resources on a small number of priorities.	The Commission is proposing that member states and regions should concentrate resources from the structural funds and national budgets on a small number of thematic priorities, linked to the Europe 2020 objectives. Those countries that receive a relatively small slice of the structural funds would be asked to focus their programmes on just 2 or 3 priorities (Cf 3.2.1).
Making payments depend on certain conditions.	The Commission proposes to agree a series of specific conditions with each member state. These could relate to the implementation of improvements to public administration or reforms to national legislation - for example regarding employment rules or environmental standards. Final payments would not be made until the pre-agreed conditions have been met.
Creating a 'performance reserve' to reward the best performers.	It has been suggested that relatively small part of the budget for cohesion policy (5%) could be kept in reserve and used for making bonus payments to those member states and regions that have been most successful in reaching and surpassing their pre-agreed targets.
Stronger monitoring and evaluation.	The Commission believes that improved monitoring and evaluation systems are necessary for supporting the move to a more results-oriented approach. It would like clear and measurable targets and indicators to be agreed in advance, which can be used to assess the outcomes of programmes in the various member states.
Combining grants with loans.	Using EU money to provide loans is seen as a way to maximise the impact of public money and encourage more financially sustainable investments. The Commission already has experience of utilising so-called 'financial engineering instruments' in the current programming period (2007-2013).
Reinforcing the territorial dimension	The Lisbon Treaty states that the European Union should promote not only economic and social cohesion but also territorial cohesion. This implies that the EU should aim to ensure a more balanced development of economic activity across all of its regions including urban and rural areas, islands and peripheral regions. In particular, the Commission intends to pay more attention to urban areas, and to increase the involvement of local and regional authorities in operational

⁹ European Commission (2011c)

	programmes.
Strengthening partnerships.	The Commission wants to increase the involvement of local and regional stakeholders, social partners and civil society organisations in the implementation of operational programmes. It also wishes to encourage the spread of local development approaches based on partnerships among the various relevant actors.

Source: <http://www.euractiv.com/regional-policy/eu-cohesion-policy-2014-2020-links dossier-501653>

3.2.1 Strengthening thematic concentration

Based on the conclusions of the Fifth Cohesion Report which point to the need to “achieve a critical mass and maximise the impact and the visibility of cohesion policy investments as well as help to reinforce European added value”, the recently adopted legislative proposals seek to reinforce the thematic concentration of Structural Funds.

The main themes eligible for ERDF support are:

- Research & innovation
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
- Shift towards a low-carbon economy
- Climate change adaptation & risk prevention and management
- Environmental protection & resource efficiency
- Sustainable transport & removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures
- Employment & supporting labour mobility
- Social inclusion & combating poverty
- Education, skills & lifelong learning
- Institutional capacity building & efficient public administrations

The proposed regulations set minimum allocations for a number of priority areas. In more developed and transition regions, at least 80 % of ERDF resources at national level should be allocated to energy efficiency and renewables, innovation and SME support, of which at least 20 % should be allocated to energy efficiency and renewables. Less developed regions will have a broader range of investment priorities to choose from, reflecting their wider development needs. Still, these will have to devote at least 50 % of ERDF resources to energy efficiency and renewable, innovation and SME support¹⁰.

3.2.2 Territorial dimension of cohesion policy and the policy’s contribution to reaching Europe 2020 objectives

The Fifth Cohesion Report published in 2010 acknowledges the ‘territorial’ dimension of the cohesion Policy based on the principles set forth by the Lisbon Treaty¹¹. Territorial dimension is thus one of the key elements found within the

¹⁰ European Commission (2011a)

¹¹ Following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, Article 3, third indent, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) now reads: « [the Union] shall promote economic, social and territorial cohesion, and solidarity among Member States. », whereas Article 2 (c) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European

subsequent body of legislation and framing guidelines adopted by the European Union over the last two years.

Based on the Green Paper published by the European Commission on Territorial Cohesion¹², this concept could be understood by:

- Concentration and density i.e. better exploiting regional potential and territorial capital;
- Connecting territories: overcoming distance e.g. access to services of general economic interest or to energy in other words integrating the economy of places with the economy of flows;
- Cooperation: overcoming division i.e. promoting co-operation cross boundaries but also better consistency between various EU and national policies with a territorial impact, both horizontally and vertically;
- Regions with specific geographical features i.e. policy differentiation to accommodate the specific features of different territories, including regions with some geographic development challenges.

The notion of territorial cohesion appears in the 'Europe 2020' several times. However, the document does not introduce any concrete guidelines for the territorialisation of its priorities nor does it consider the territorial consequences of the actions proposed¹³.

The Territorial Agenda 2020 adopted in 2011 on the other hand is explicitly aimed at providing strategic orientations for territorial development, fostering integration of the territorial dimension within different policies across all governance levels while overseeing implementation of the 'Europe 2020' strategy in accordance with the principles of territorial cohesion¹⁴. The six main territorial priorities for the development of the EU set out in the Territorial Agenda are:

- Promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development as an important precondition of territorial cohesion and a strong factor in territorial competitiveness.
- Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions to foster synergies and better exploit local territorial assets.
- Territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions as a key factor in global competition facilitating better utilisation of development potentials and the protection of the natural environment

Union (TFEU) provides that « Shared competence between the Union and the Member States applies in (...) economic, social and territorial cohesion ».

¹² European Commission (2008)

¹³ Böhme K et al (2011)

¹⁴ Böhme K et al (2011)

- Ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies as a key factor in global competition preventing the drain of human capital and reducing vulnerability to external development shocks
- Improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises as an important precondition of territorial cohesion (e.g. services of general interest); a strong factor for territorial competitiveness and an essential condition for sustainable development
- Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions, including joint risk management as an essential condition for long term sustainable development

However, as highlighted by a report published under the Polish Presidency of the European Council on the Territorial Dimension the Cohesion Policy, the implementation of the Territorial Agenda “depends on the goodwill of different EU bodies and national actors. Its links to the Cohesion Policy and, indeed, to other policies remain very general while its contribution to the policy making mechanism outlined in the 5th Cohesion Report can be described as vague or at best insufficiently explicit”¹⁵.

The reinforcement of Territorial Cohesion is addressed by the recently adopted legislation proposals, mainly through the following actions¹⁶:

- Focusing on sustainable urban development by earmarking a minimum of 5 % of ERDF resources for activities in this field.
- Establishing an urban development platform to promote capacity building and exchanges of experience, and the adoption of a list of cities where integrated actions for sustainable urban development will be implemented.
- Supporting areas facing specific geographical or demographic problems through targeted provisions for outermost regions, northernmost regions, island and cross-border and mountain regions.

Following the adoption of 2011 legislative package framing the EU’s cohesion policy, DG REGIO issued two Communications on ‘smart growth’ and ‘sustainable growth’. Both communications highlight the contribution of regional policy to Europe 2020 objectives and flagship initiatives¹⁷. The following table provides a summary of the recommended actions set forth by DG REGIO, for both Member State and European Commission, in order to promote smart growth.

¹⁵ Böhme K et al (2011)

¹⁶ European Commission (2011a)

¹⁷ Mendez C, Bachtler J & Wishtdale F (2011)

Table 2 Recommended actions to promote Smart Growth

Actor	Actions
Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing smart specialisation strategies drawing on support for technical assistance and subjecting them to international peer review. • Make more extensive use of financial engineering instruments in support of innovation • Pursuing the possibility to finance interregional cooperation to promote research and innovation and better access to international research and innovation networks under FP7 and CIP. • Ensuring coherence between supply push and demand pull research and innovation policy, by making use of the opportunities offered by public procurement co-financed by the ERDF to increase the innovation content of products, processes and services. • Using international peer review by independent experts for research projects more systematically to enhance the effectiveness of support. • Considering the use of the ERDF for financing suitable shortlisted FP7 and CIP projects. • Exploiting the possibilities for improving regional innovation policy through peer learning: offered by FP7, CIP and INTERREG IV C platforms and networks.
European Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate smart specialisation strategies by developing (a) a 'Smart Specialisation Platform' to help identify needs, strengths and opportunities (b) data, policy analysis and information on research and innovation performance and specialisation from an EU-wide perspective (c) platforms for mutual learning • Assist education, research and innovation projects through knowledge transfer and diffusion of good practice, with the help of the 'Regions for Economic Change' initiative and by providing technical support to innovation-based Fast Track regional networks and to interregional collaboration supported • Work with financial institutions to leverage funding and maximise the use of existing financial instruments, including by establishing a RSFF window/facility for Convergence regions, more intensive use of JEREMIE, as well as by examining ways of extending the scope of existing financial engineering instruments to new research and innovation activities. • Facilitate business opportunities for SMEs' through consolidating and reinforcing the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), the partners of which should, in turn, help organisations to make better use of ERDF financing for innovation. • Improve the coherence and complementarity of EU policies for education, research and innovation, with the aim of: promoting the take-up of good practice; expanding and upgrading the 'Practical Guide on EU funding opportunities' and establishing a single web-based portal on Commission support for research and innovation linked to the FP7 Participant Portal.

The concept of 'Smart specialisation'¹⁸ was developed by the "Knowledge for Growth" expert group advising the European Commission. Smart specialisation is defined by the group as "an entrepreneurial process of discovery that can reveal what a country or region does best in terms of science and technology....a learning process to discover the research and innovation domains in which a region can hope to excel"¹⁹ This implies regions should seek to ensure a more effective use of public and private funds by concentrating resources on few key priorities rather than spreading investment thinly across areas and business sector²⁰.

¹⁸ Foray D, David P.A., Bronwyn H (2009)

¹⁹ Foray D, David P.A., Bronwyn H (2009)

²⁰ European Commission (2011c)

According to the “Knowledge for Growth” experts, the role for governmental S&T policies in setting up smart specialisation is²¹:

- To supply incentives to encourage entrepreneurs and other organizations (higher education, research laboratories) to become involved in the discovery of the regions’ respective specialisations.
- Evaluating and assessing effectiveness so that the support of a particular line of capability formation will not be discontinued too soon, nor continued so long that subsidies are wasted on otherwise non-viable enterprises.
- Identifying complementary investments associated with the emerging specialisations (educational and training institutions, for example) in the case of a region investing in the co-invention of applications of a General Purpose Technology (GPT).

In June 2011, the European Commission launched the “smart specialisation platform” in order to support regions and Member States to define their research and innovation strategies. The approach developed by the platform is meant to provide assistance for regions to assess their specific Research and Innovation strengths and weaknesses and build on their competitive advantage, based on the concept of ‘smart specialisation’. According to the platform, by using this instrument regions should be able to “identify its best assets and R&I potential in order to concentrate its efforts and resources on a limited number of priorities where it can really develop excellence and compete in the global economy”²².

This will in turn allow regions to develop innovation strategies, or smart specialisation strategies, “defining a policy mix and budgetary framework focusing on a limited number of priorities to stimulate smart growth”. The strategies should be based on strong partnerships between regional authorities, the business community and stakeholders from research and academia. They should not only target science and technology-led innovation but also foster innovation that is non-science based (i.e stimulating entrepreneurship, innovation in the public sector and service innovation). They should also ensure a more effective and complementary use of EU investments in the regions and help leverage private investments towards the regions’ areas of specialisation²³.

²¹ Foray D, David P.A., Bronwyn H (2009)

²² <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/776&type=HTML>

²³ <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/776&type=HTML>

3.2.3 The AMCER project and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020

In 2007, the German EU Council Presidency organised a ministerial meeting which led to the adoption of the "Territorial Agenda of the EU". The Territorial Agenda is a brief policy paper set on providing recommendations for integrated spatial planning policy for sustainable economic growth and more employment in the regions and cities of Europe.

More recently, the Territorial Agenda of the EU was reviewed at the meeting of ministers responsible for spatial development in Gödöllő, Hungary (May 2011). As result, a new version of the Territorial Agenda was adopted with the title "Territorial Agenda 2020: Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions" (TA 2020). This policy paper was designed to better fit the recently adopted reforms to the European policy framework, and especially, the "Europe 2020" strategy²⁴.

TA2020 defines a number of territorial Priorities for the development of the European Union. The objectives of the AMCER project are clearly in line with priority number 4 - Ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies - which states that the "use of social capital, territorial assets, and the development of innovation and smart specialisation strategies in a place-based approach can play a key role (in the development of globally integrated economic sectors and strong local economies)... Strengthening research, human capital, the capacity for innovation and bringing ideas to the market are essential"²⁵.

Among the territorial cohesion implementation mechanisms identified, TA2020 underlines the strengthening of territorial cohesion at EU level. Again, the AMCER methodology and approach are of particular relevance in this regard. According to the agenda, an "integrated impact assessments for all significant EU policies and programmes should continue to be developed based on stakeholder inputs". AMCER is clearly focussed on producing an evidence-base on the impact of European research programmes at the local and regional levels, as well as to provide a clearer picture of local assets and strengths in support of the design of local development strategies (eg smart specialisation).

Finally, the contributions of ESPON to the production of the necessary methodological tools and of a comprehensive territorial knowledge based are explicitly acknowledged by TA2020. The agenda suggests ESPON take into account its priorities and challenges of in its research activity. The added value of the AMCER project in this regards evident. The AMCER tool allows producing more precise pictures of Regional involvement of European research programmes.

²⁴ <http://www.bmvbs.de/SharedDocs/EN/Artikel/SW/territorial-agenda-of-the-eu.html>

²⁵ <http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/TA2020.pdf>

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The ESPON 2013 Programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the EU Member States and the Partner States Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. It shall support policy development in relation to the aim of territorial cohesion and a harmonious development of the European territory.

ISBN