



European
Commission

PANORAMA

AUTUMN 2016 / No. 58

An Urban Agenda for the EU

APULIA
HAS BIG
AMBITIONS



GROWING A
CIRCULAR
ECONOMY



Regional and
Urban Policy

PANORAMA

EDITORIAL.....	03	APULIA ATTRACTS ATTENTION.....	30
URBAN AGENDA.....	04	COHESIFY AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY.....	36
REGIOSTARS FINALISTS.....	10	EUROPE IN MY REGION CAMPAIGN.....	38
FUNDING BOOST FOR MECKLENBURG-WESTERN POMERANIA.....	14	INTERVIEW WITH MARJORIE JOUEN.....	40
GROWING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY.....	16	MOOC: EU FUNDING EXPLAINED.....	42
REGIONAL INNOVATION IN FINLAND.....	20	NEWS IN BRIEF.....	43
PORTUGAL PRIORITISES INVESTMENT.....	21	TAKING ON THE MAFIA.....	45
FUNDING LANGUEDOC'S COMPANIES.....	23	PORTAL HELPS SMES IN SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PROJECT.....	46
STOCKHOLM'S SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT.....	24	PROJECTS FROM GREECE AND THE BALTIC SEA REGION.....	48
CAPTURED ON CAMERA IN SLOVENIA.....	26	MAPS: ROAD ACCESSIBILITY.....	50
SMART REGIONS CONFERENCE.....	28	AGENDA.....	52



04



10



36



46

In this issue ...

Welcome to the autumn 2016 edition of *Panorama*. Our main feature in this issue looks at the EU Urban Agenda, as established by the Amsterdam Pact agreed during the summer. We examine how it plans to improve life for city dwellers across the EU. We also take a look at how the Commission's new package of measures to promote the circular economy will help reduce waste and encourage sustainability. This time, our in-depth coverage of one European region features Puglia in Italy, and includes an interview with the region's president and a selection of recent successful projects.

In addition, we consider developments in smart specialisation strategies, while the 'In Your Own Words' section gives the floor

to stakeholders from Finland, France, Germany, Portugal and Sweden. Our projects section features contributions from the Baltic Region and Greece while the expanded project feature goes into more details about a green mobility solution in the Netherlands.

I wish you a pleasant read.

Ana Paula Laissy

ANA-PAULA LAISSY

*Head of Communication Unit, Directorate-General
for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission*

EDITORIAL

A lot happened during the 2007-2013 period: we were hit by the biggest economic and financial crisis the Union has ever known; we welcomed three new EU Member States; and we adopted an ambitious set of goals to be met by 2020, the Europe 2020 strategy.

To assess how Cohesion Policy managed to adapt to these demanding circumstances, the Commission has recently published the findings of an evaluation covering regional policy during the 2007-2013 period.

The evaluation was performed by independent experts who interviewed over 3000 beneficiaries and 1000 employees of the managing authorities responsible for implementing the programmes, and showed the extent to which EU funds impact the economy.

During 2007-2013, EUR 270 billion was invested through the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund. This funding represented a vital source of finance for many Member States, amounting to between 20-50% of available capital investment in most countries, even reaching 57% in one Member State (Hungary).

The evaluation showed that these investments supported 250000 SMEs and helped create 1 million jobs between 2007 and 2013, which is equivalent to a third of net job creation in the EU over that period. In addition, for every euro invested, EUR 2.74 of additional GDP is expected to be generated by 2023.



These positive impacts extend to every EU region and Member State, improving citizens' living standards in areas such as transport, environment, energy efficiency, education and health care.

The evaluation was also an opportunity to determine possible improvements. For example, it confirmed our belief that clearer goals and systems were required for tracking progress and evaluating results in the programmes.

These points have already been addressed in the 2014-2020 reform. In addition, continuous efforts are being made – by the Commission and by policy-makers in the Member States – to further improve the result-oriented approach of our policy in the future.

Because delivering results – improving the lives of 500 million European citizens – is what matters most.

In this issue of *Panorama*, you will discover many concrete examples and real-life stories, as well as testimonials from people directly involved in Cohesion Policy, showing how EU funds can contribute to this objective. ■

CORINA CREȚU

European Commissioner for Regional Policy



Building partnerships to improve urban areas

On 30 May, government ministers responsible for urban affairs agreed on the Pact of Amsterdam, establishing the Urban Agenda for the EU. On 24 June, the General Affairs Council formally endorsed it. Their goal is to start working together with all stakeholders on an equal basis to improve Europe's cities, towns and suburbs.

Urban areas, home to most European citizens and the engines of the EU economy, will benefit from an innovative collaborative approach to developing and implementing policies with a local focus but a significant European dimension. By establishing partnerships involving city authorities, Member States, EU institutions and other stakeholders, including NGOs and businesses, the Urban Agenda will support Europe's economic and social development.

It aims to provide citizens with new opportunities, improve their quality of life and address key urban challenges, from employment and social inclusion to mobility, the environment and climate change.

Smart, sustainable and inclusive

The European Union is one of the most urbanised areas in the world. More than 70% of Europe's citizens live in a city, suburb or similar urban area, a figure that the UN expects to

rise to 80% by 2050. More than 70% of all jobs in Europe are in urban areas, while cities and towns are home to more than 80% of people aged 25-64 with a tertiary education.

Thus, how cities progress will have a significant impact on the economic, social and environmental development of the whole of Europe, and will be a major factor in meeting the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

However, cities, towns and suburbs are also places where challenges such as segregation, unemployment and poverty are concentrated. The Urban Agenda therefore recognises the role

COMING SOON....

The State of European Cities Report

The State of European Cities report, Cities leading the way to a better future, shows how cities contribute to European goals and strategies. Cities play a key role in boosting innovation and education, supporting social integration and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It underlines the resource efficiency of cities and with the right governance systems this can be further enhanced. This report was created to support the Urban Agenda for the EU and the new Urban Agenda. It will be launched in October in Brussels.



^ Bratislava, Slovakia

of cities in tackling some of Europe's most pressing socio-economic issues, and builds on the important role urban authorities play as the level of government often closest to the citizens.

According to Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy: "Cities are hubs of creativity and engines of European growth, but they face major challenges, such as social exclusion, air pollution or unemployment. We need to tackle these problems together. Our commitment to having an Urban Agenda shows that we are putting urban matters higher on our agenda and are ready to listen more to our cities when it comes to what works for them and what needs to be improved."

The Urban Agenda will establish 12 partnerships each involving 15 to 20 stakeholders collaborating on an equal basis to address 12 priority themes.

On the socio-economic front, these priorities include developing jobs and education in the local economy, tackling urban poverty and addressing housing and mobility issues as well as initiatives to support the integration of immigrants and refugees. Environmental challenges are also a key focus, including sustainable land use, developing the circular economy, climate adaptation, energy usage and air quality.

In addition, other issues, like the transition to a digital economy, responsible public procurement and cross-cutting themes, such as small and medium-sized cities, urban-rural linkages or innovation, will also be addressed.

12 PRIORITY THEMES

- › Jobs and skills in the local economy
- › Urban poverty
- › Housing
- › Inclusion of migrants and refugees
- › Sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions
- › Circular economy
- › Climate adaptation
- › Energy transition
- › Urban mobility
- › Air quality
- › Digital transition
- › Innovative and responsible public procurement

Target projects

Four pilot partnerships – tackling housing, the integration of migrants and refugees, poverty and air pollution – have already been launched, with others due to begin during the coming year.

The city of Amsterdam, for example, is coordinating the project focused on the inclusion of migrants and refugees. Building on the willingness and integration capacity of local communities, the initiative will address housing, cultural integration, the provision of public services, social inclusion, education and labour market measures, as well as creating opportunities for second- and third-generation immigrant families. ➤

- ✓ *Committee of the Regions Forum on the EU-Urban Agenda in Amsterdam on 30 May 2016: from left to right: Raffaele Cattaneo, Member of the CoR and President of the Lombardia Regional Council, Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, and Ronald Plasterk, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Netherlands.*



The three-year project involves the participation of three European Commission Directorates-General (Regional and Urban Policy; Migration and Home Affairs; and Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion). Other stakeholders include organisations such as EUROCITIES, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the cities of Athens, Berlin, Helsinki, Barcelona, and Member States Portugal, Italy, Greece and Denmark.

The Netherlands is also coordinating a pilot project on air quality to provide concrete help to cities by studying the impact of air pollution in urban areas and drawing up guidelines for best practices on policy implementation. In addition, it will improve the capacity of cities to implement environmental regulations on air quality and to access available funding at both the national and EU level.

Other pilot initiatives include a project to develop affordable high-quality housing solutions coordinated by Slovakia, and an initiative to tackle the challenge of urban poverty, addressing both the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods and the socio-economic integration of residents, which is being jointly overseen by Belgium and France.

Each of these projects involves cooperation among experts from Member States, the European Commission, cities, NGOs and other stakeholders – all of whom are equal partners with the freedom to decide their individual level of participation.

New way of working

As Commissioner Crețu explains: “It is real multi-level governance: the Urban Agenda for the EU is not EU-led (community approach), not Member State-led (intergovernmental), not cities-led and not stakeholders-led. It is a new way of working.”

FUNDING FOR CITIES UNDER THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENTS FUNDS (ESI FUNDS)

In the funding period 2014-2020, ESIF investments are directly targeting urban areas to create better opportunities for sustainable urban mobility, the physical, economic and social regeneration of deprived communities, and greater research and innovation capacity:

ESF:

EUR 1.5 billion allocated to sustainable urban development

URBACT:

EUR 96 million for integrated urban development

Urban Innovative Actions:

EUR 370 million

Interreg Europe:

EUR 425 million, with a significant sum for cities

ESPON:

EUR 49 million, a part of which is for urban studies



^ Amsterdam, Netherlands

“ Our commitment to having an Urban Agenda shows that we are putting urban matters higher on our agenda ”

Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy

In effect, the Urban Agenda is a method to address urban matters more directly, for different organisations and stakeholders to work more closely with cities and, in turn, to ask more from cities to address a variety of challenges. Ultimately, the approach will have an important impact on urban development and provide tangible results for citizens.

Urban authorities are naturally at the centre of the agenda. They are usually the level of government closest to citizens, the first point of contact with public administration for people regarding many different issues, and the public bodies with which citizens have more interaction on a regular basis.

Although the EU does not have explicit competence on urban policy, many EU policies are implemented in cities, by cities. For example, the European Commission's Investment Plan for Europe, which aims to mobilise investments of at least EUR 315 billion over three years to support the real economy, has a significant urban dimension. Of its 10 priorities, seven are closely connected with urban areas, ranging from improving the mobility of citizens and developing energy infrastructure to supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, boosting job creation and strengthening economic growth.

Crucially, there is significant demand for more EU involvement to support urban development. A public consultation carried out in 2014 showed that many cities and stakeholders want the European Commission to be more proactive at the local level in order to help make its policies more effective, more efficient and implemented at a lower cost. In turn, this approach should

reflect the Commission's principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, under which the EU must concentrate its actions on areas where it can make a real difference.

Main players

Thus, the Commission will have a central function in the development of the Urban Agenda for the EU, providing expertise, implementing actions and facilitating the process. Other stakeholders involved as equal partners are the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, Member States, cities, and numerous experts, NGOs and businesses, all of which have voiced strong support for the Urban Agenda.

The Pact of Amsterdam also recognises that the European Investment Bank plays an important role in financing investments in areas covered by the Urban Agenda. It provides various types of financing in cities via lending, financial instruments, grant-loan blending for urban investments and by advising Member States and cities. The EIB can participate in the Urban Agenda partnerships and it will be an observer during meetings to discuss the outcomes.

The need for this multi-level and collaborative approach is exemplified by the way many public policies are being implemented. For example, in the case of social housing, the EU



^ During the Urban Agenda conference, EU ministers responsible for urban policy adopt the Pact of Amsterdam

sets some rules, such as regulations on the energy efficiency of buildings, but Member States decide on the number of social housing units, other bodies may provide funding, and cities ultimately build the houses and make the link with inhabitants. It is therefore crucial that all stakeholders – from the EU level down to the local level and the citizens themselves – are involved in the process.

Under the collaborative approach at the heart of the Urban Agenda, all stakeholders with something to contribute will have the possibility to do so, ensuring that no one is excluded and that the procedures are transparent and accessible to all.

More impact at lower cost

This approach ties in closely with the Commission's commitment to Better Regulation, a strategy aimed at ensuring that EU policies and laws are designed to achieve their objectives at minimum cost.

The Better Regulation Agenda ensures that policy is prepared, implemented and reviewed in an open, transparent manner, informed by the best available evidence and backed up by input from stakeholders. In addition, the Commission assesses the expected and actual impacts of policies, legislation and other important measures at every stage of the policy cycle – from planning to implementation, to review and subsequent revision.

In the context of the Urban Agenda, this means that action plans designed by the partnerships will focus on a more effective and coherent implementation of existing EU policies in cities in different fields, such as the environment, transport and employment. The Commission will also focus on easing access to EU funding, promoting combinations of EU funds, and enhancing the knowledge base regarding urban matters and exchange of best practices.

“ It is real multi-level governance. It is a new way of working ”

Corina Crețu, European Commissioner for Regional Policy

Reflecting this approach, a 'one-stop shop' in the form of an internet platform on the Europa website will provide a single entry point for cities and stakeholders to access complete, reliable and customised information on EU urban initiatives.

According to Commissioner Crețu: “Until now, cities were not sufficiently involved in the design of our policies and not enough mobilised for their delivery, for example for the use of EU funds. Thanks to the Urban Agenda for the EU, this will change. We can make our policies more effective, more efficient and implemented at a lower cost.” ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://urbanagendaforthe.eu/>
<http://urbanagendaforthe.eu/pactofamsterdam/>
EU Urban Agenda: <http://europa.eu/!nc84Rf>



European Commission



URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU



EU CITIZENS
living in cities



EU LEGISLATION
implemented by cities



JOBS
created in cities



EU GDP
generated in cities

OBJECTIVES



- BETTER REGULATION
- BETTER FUNDING
- BETTER KNOWLEDGE

“ THE COMMISSION WILL PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE AND CONTINUE FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE URBAN AGENDA ”

KEY PRINCIPLES

Multi-level governance	Partnership working method	Integrated approach	Sustainable urban development
United Nations goals	Functional urban areas	Urban-rural linkages	Cities of all sizes

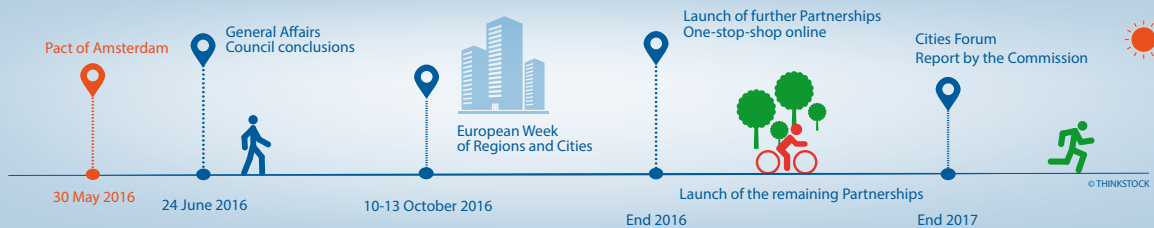
12 PRIORITY THEMES

PARTNERSHIPS WHICH ALREADY STARTED

INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS & REFUGEES	AIR QUALITY	HOUSING	URBAN POVERTY
ENERGY TRANSITION	SUSTAINABLE USE OF LAND AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS	DIGITAL TRANSITION	PUBLIC PROCUREMENT
JOBS & SKILLS IN LOCAL ECONOMY	CIRCULAR ECONOMY	CLIMATE ADAPTATION	URBAN MOBILITY



TIMELINE



www.twitter.com/EU_Regional
www.facebook.com/EUinmyregion

www.flickr.com/euregional
www.yammer.com/regionnetwork
DG REGIO collaborative platform

#EUUA #EUUrbanAgenda
#EURegional

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy

Regional and Urban Policy



RegioStars Awards 2016: 23 projects reach the final

Once again, this year's RegioStars Awards have put the spotlight on Europe's most outstanding regional projects. The expert jury selected 23 finalists, coming from 14 Member States, from the 104 applications received. Trophies will be presented to the winners on 11 October during the European Week of Regions and Cities 2016.

THIS YEAR, MANAGING AUTHORITIES
COULD SUBMIT PROJECTS IN FIVE
AWARD CATEGORIES:

SMART GROWTH: emerging opportunities in the global economy

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: circular economy

INCLUSIVE GROWTH: integrated living – building inclusive and non-segregated communities

CITYSTAR: innovative solutions for sustainable urban development

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE FUNDS: making a difference by managing differently.

THE FINALISTS

SMART GROWTH

**1. BRIDGE: Region Västra Götaland, Sweden
(European Regional Development Fund – ERDF)**

The BRIDGE programme was developed to help the Swedish med-tech industry expand its market internationally. The 27 participating med-tech initiatives and start-ups benefitted from a better understanding of the market and a roadmap for exploring new markets.

<http://www.sahlgrenskasciencepark.se/>

**2. Copenhagen Cleantech Cluster: Capital Region
of Denmark (ERDF)**

The Cleantech project focused on ensuring smart growth, innovation and cooperation among Danish cleantech companies and knowledge institutions. The cluster created 1096 jobs, supported 126 start-ups and, having merged with the Danish Lean Energy Cluster, now boasts over 170 members. <http://cleancluster.dk/>

**3. Crossroads: Interreg Belgium and the Netherlands
(ERDF)**

The Crossroads project fostered sustainable cooperation between companies and research institutes across the Belgium/Netherlands border. The 150 participating firms organised 25 cross-border innovation projects, 13 feasibility studies and 40 experiments, resulting in the introduction of several new products and processes into the market place.

<http://www.crossroadsproject.eu/>

4. InfectoGnostics Research Campus Jena: Thuringia, Germany (ERDF)

Being able to diagnose and identify infections quickly can save lives. As a result of long-term cross-sector cooperation, technologists and scientists developed innovative, more efficient and marketable point-of-care diagnostic tests using photonics. <http://www.infectognostics.de/>

5. Mapping Basilicata: Basilicata, Italy (ERDF)

The project set out to revitalise the region's economy by strengthening the presence of local SMEs on international markets. This was done by introducing innovative production processes and modernising the image of certain industrial sectors. Over 20 events were held, three regional brands were launched and more than 200 products were introduced into foreign markets. <http://www.sviluppobasilicata.it/>

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

1. Brussels Greenbizz: Brussels Capital Region, Belgium (ERDF)

This 'eco-friendly business incubator' supports entrepreneurial projects and start-ups by providing fully equipped office space, workshop areas and administrative services. Initial results are promising and within three to four years, occupancy is expected to rise to 90%, creating an estimated 200 jobs. <http://www.greenbizz.brussels/en/>

2. Centro Bio: Bio-industries, Biorefineries and Bioproducts: Centro, Portugal (ERDF)

This innovation campus is helping rural regions become less dependent on energy and raw materials by collaborating on innovative products and technologies based on the circular economy. The project has already helped set up 24 R&D sub-projects and overseen the creation of four spin-offs, six start-ups and follow-up investment of EUR 125 million.

<http://www.blc3.pt/>

3. Circular Ocean (Interreg, United Kingdom/Ireland/Greenland/Norway (ERDF)

This project is finding solutions for reusing marine waste, such as discarded fishing nets and ropes. Through its actions, the project drives eco-innovation, stimulates efficient and

environmentally responsible entrepreneurship while reducing the levels of marine litter. Potential new uses for the discarded material include reinforced concrete, brick tiles and roof insulation. <http://www.circularocean.eu/>

4. Construction of waste management site for special purpose association of municipalities: Lubelskie Region, Poland (ERDF)

The project financed a new waste management plant with technology enabling the collection of the entire municipal waste stream as well as separate processing of packaging, organic, ballast, hazardous and mineral fraction waste. The improvements will benefit the environment and citizens' health. <http://www.proekob.pl/>

5. Innovative technologies in treatment of waste from wine production: City of Zagreb and Istria County, Croatia (ERDF)

Collaboration between scientists, researchers and SMEs in the wine sector resulted in new and ecologically acceptable



^ Commissioner Crețu at the RegioStars Awards 2015 Ceremony

technologies to exploit the potential of organic waste from wine production, significantly reducing the industry's environmental impact.

http://www.pbf.unizg.hr/en/departments/department_of_food_engineering/laboratory_for_technology_of_fruits_and_vegetables_preservation_and_processing/

INCLUSIVE GROWTH

1. Academy of Social Economy: Malopolske Region, Poland (European Social Fund – ESF)

The project connected people facing difficult situations, such as the unemployed, disabled, refugees, the mentally ill and substance abusers, with organisations which helped them reintegrate into society. Over 1700 individuals benefitted, as well as 245 social economy and 203 service entities.

<http://www.rops.krakow.pl/>

2. Diversity for kids: Interreg, Tirol/Alto Adige/Trentino, Austria and Italy (ERDF)

Recreational activities shared by around 1800 children and 100 teachers in Austria and Italy were designed to stimulate cultural awareness. Besides significant improvements in the classroom, the project also enhanced teachers' skills in promoting dialogue and non-discrimination.

<http://www.diversity4kids.eu/de/>

3. Euregio Barrierefrei: Interreg, Austria and German (ERDF)

The aim was to raise awareness of the accessibility needs of people with mental disabilities via initiatives in accessible tourism. An online platform was created to promote suitable holiday accommodation – 90 tourist facilities were reviewed and registered and most EU tourist associations have now linked to the Barrierefrei portal.

<http://clw-traunreut.de/>

4. Vives Emplea – teambuilding for social and labour inclusion: national project, Spain (ESF)

This programme is helping unemployed people to improve their social and job skills, through group sessions, mentoring and networking opportunities. Since April 2014, 44 projects

have been developed attracting 1325 participants, of whom 54% found job placements and 29% began studies.

<https://www.accioncontraelhambre.org/es>

CITYSTAR

1. Abattoir: Foodmet with urban farm land manufakturel: Brussels Capital Region, Belgium (ERDF)

Brussels' important abattoir site has been transformed into a modern food market housing around 50 shops and providing around 150 jobs. The project is aiming to develop new economic activities linked to the food chain, including a rooftop vegetable garden and greenhouses.

<http://www.abattoir.be/en/eu-regiostars-awards>

2. Alley of change: North-Rhine-Westphalia, German (ERDF)

A new eco-friendly bicycle highway has enhanced low-carbon transport in this traditionally industrial area. Several social inclusion and economic development projects which were developed around the bicycle path have helped create 2000 jobs in what is now a vibrant metropolitan area.

<https://www.herten.de/kultur-und-freizeit/naherholung-erholung-im-gruenen/radfahren-in-herten/zechenbahntrasse-allee-des-wandels.html>

3. Intelligent transport system: Wrocław, Poland (ERDF)

Travel times in the city of Wrocław have been reduced and traffic has become much more fluid thanks to the city's innovative transport system. To monitor traffic and intervene when necessary, the system uses cameras, sensors and complex communication software to collect and transmit information to an operational hub, which currently employs over 70 people. <http://its.wroc.pl/>

4. Revitalisation of Lower Town District of Gdańsk: Pomorskie Voivdeship, Poland (ERDF)

Investments in infrastructure and social fabric plus social and cultural activities aim to fight social exclusion, in particular among disadvantaged families. A large area has been reno-

RegioStars Awards



^ Commissioner Crețu and President of the Jury MEP Lambert Van Nistelrooij at the RegioStars Awards 2015 press event

vated, 33 facilities revitalised, and around 9500 people have participated in 210 inclusion programmes. In addition, five new jobs have been created at the city's child day-care centre. <http://bit.ly/2be10Mm>

5. The urban distribution centre of the city of Charleroi: Wallonia, Belgium (ERDF)

Construction of a distribution centre outside of the city has reduced traffic congestion in the narrow inner city streets, enhancing mobility and air quality. By 2020, the project is expected to reduce harmful CO₂ emissions by 38% and create 20 jobs. <http://www.charleroi.be/le-centre-distribution-urbaine-attend-ses-premiers-colis>

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

1. European social sound: Umbria, Italy (ESF)

A contest for emerging music bands was used to inform young people, in a dynamic and effective way, about the opportunities provided by EU funding. Using images, video testimonials, storytelling and a quiz, the regional administration came into contact with a large target audience of young people who enjoyed and learnt from the initiative.

<http://www.regione.umbria.it/home>

2. Development of a unit cost for R&D in Northern Ireland: Northern Ireland, UK (Technical Assistance –TA)

The audit burden experienced by the country's R&D firms has been a significant disincentive to their participation in ERDF-funded activities. The new unit cost will enable substantial

savings in the resources spent on technical assistance for auditing. <http://www.jobsandgrowthni.gov.uk/>

3. Open innovation platform in RIS3 context: Lombardia, Italy (ERDF)

The platform is a collaborative tool supporting open innovation ecosystems, enabling dialogue between the private and public economy sector and research institutes. By March 2016, 3200 users had registered, 222 project ideas had been proposed and 435 expressions of interest in these projects had been lodged.

<http://www.openinnovation.regione.lombardia.it/it/home-page>

4. Transparency initiative Jonvabalai (Fireflies): National project, Lithuania (ESF and TA)

To improve public perception of transparency in the use of EU funds, a website was set up allowing projects financed by European Structural Funds to make information on their financial management available to the public. Since September 2014, over 630 project managers have submitted project details which have been viewed by 35 500 unique visitors, significantly increasing the perception of transparency among EU citizens.

<http://www.esinvesticijos.lt/> ■

FIND OUT MORE

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/regio-stars-awards/



^ The Minister of Economics of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania Harry Glawe (on the left) and Raphaël Goulet from DG Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission (second from left) visiting EEW Special Pipe Constructions Ltd in Rostock

Positive economic development through EU support

Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania has made good economic progress thanks to the European Union.

The state's business infrastructure is being upgraded with EU funds and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is being better marketed as a business location and tourism destination. Likewise, companies investing in creating and securing jobs, integrated sustainable urban development, health economy projects and research, development and innovation are also being supported. Locals and visitors to our federal state can actively experience this. Well-laid-out cycle tracks, beautiful harbours, attractive zoos and tourist facilities are enjoying growing popularity. A record number of visitors were recorded in 2015 with 29.5 million overnight stays.

In general, conditions have significantly improved economically: business parks opened, companies relocating here and others expanding, and an extremely well developed infrastructure – without EU support such projects would scarcely have turned into reality. There is a great variety of European funding in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.



In the EU funding period 2014-2020, this region is receiving around EUR 968 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). A focus for the Ministry of Economics is the funding for research, development and innovation. Between now and 2020, we will invest EUR 168 million from the ERDF in this.

The focus is primarily on supporting cooperation between the economy and science – the so-called collaborative research. We need more marketable products that can be researched, developed and produced in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, so we are increasing sustainable value creation. More knowledge-based jobs are being created in the primary job market. It is in the synergies between innovation and investment support in particular that I see good opportunities to further increase value creation.

We are all a living part of Europe. The community of states also contributes decisively to enhancing the quality of work and life in one's own country. Twenty-five years of economic development in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania are closely allied with input from the European Structural Funds. In the current EU funding period, we have created the conditions for

further sustainable growth in our state. The focus is on driving forward the economic catching-up process here. We want to broaden our state's economic base and improve the general conditions for more employment.

A lot has been done here. Get to know us – on holiday or as a potential investor. Make comprehensive use of the possibilities offered with EU support. We will give you a warm welcome in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

HARRY GLAWE

*Minister for the Economy,
Construction and Tourism of the State of
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania*

Other notable projects funded by the ERDF and ESF in the 2007-2013 period include:

- **ThermSelect**, Rostock: The SME is delivering a heating and energy programme featuring high-performing and efficient regenerative energy for company buildings, offices and homes. The centrepiece of the environmentally friendly and sustainable intelligent system is a hybrid heat pump combining aerothermal and geothermal energy supplemented by a solar thermal system.
- **Schwerin**, Rostock: Together, **Human Med AG** and **Rostock University** have developed a small, easy-to-use mobile medical instrument for extracting fatty tissues for dermatology and regenerative medicine. The device will be used to treat chronic wounds and for reconstructive surgery.
- **Energy Village**, Bollewick: The local heating network provides for the decentralised self-generation of heat and electricity for community use. Two biomass cogeneration units use regionally provided raw material to produce energy for distribution via the local heating network.
- **Plus Energy School**, Rostock: Extensive energy and building renovation is being funded at this European school and higher-education complex for gifted pupils. Innovative energy engineering solutions, based on a photovoltaic plant and small wind turbines, will produce the building's energy requirements.

- **River Warnow**, Rostock: The river bank is being redeveloped to cope with traffic between the city centre and to the south-east, while improvements in the Alter Warnowarm region will include river-bank reinforcements and a green belt. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://www.mecklenburg-vorpommern.de/startseite/>

TOWERING ABOVE THE COMPETITION

EEW Special Pipe Constructions GmbH, the global market leader in monopiles for wind turbines, is heavily involved in collaborative projects with Germany's Fraunhofer Application Center for Large Structures in Production Engineering, developing lighter structures for constructing large wind turbines (generating up to 10 megawatts) for use offshore. Recently, Harry Glawe, Minister for Economic Affairs, presented a further subsidy as part of the 'Europe in My Region' campaign for a new collaborative project by EEW SPC and the Fraunhofer Center to develop an innovative procedure for combining thick-walled plates.

<http://www.eewspc.com/>

HEALTHY OUTLOOK FOR CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Cortronik develops and produces stents – medical vessel supports for the cardiovascular system. The company employs over 200 staff and manufactures half a million stents every year. It benefits mainly from collaborative research with the Institute for Implant Technology and Biomaterials, Competence Centre for Medical Technology in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the universities in Rostock and Greifswald. Together with its partners, it is a successful example of a sustainable value chain, with research, development and production all taking place on the Warnemünde site.

<http://www.cortronik.com/de/>

Growing the circular economy

BUILDING A STRONGER, GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The aim of the circular economy is to ‘close the loop’ in product life cycles by keeping as many resources in the economy as possible, thereby reducing waste and promoting sustainability. As the European Commission presents a package of measures to develop the circular economy, *Panorama* reveals how Cohesion Policy funding can support its objectives.

For the circular economy to work, the value of products, materials and resources must remain useful for as long as possible. The goal is to transform an economy so that it can be both competitive and resource efficient.

The circular economy is positive for businesses. Any move towards a circular economy could pay huge dividends by protecting them against the scarcity of resources and volatile pricing for dwindling commodities. Moreover, the circular economy requires an innovative approach to production and consumption that offers the savvy entrepreneur significant opportunities.

In December 2015, the European Commission adopted a Circular Economy Package in order to boost competitiveness, create jobs and generate sustainable growth. The Package sets out measures to help businesses, public authorities and consumers make the transition to a circular economy.

BURIED TREASURE

The Closing the Circle (CtC) project is mining secondary raw materials and creating green energy at a 130-hectare landfill in eastern Belgium. The site at Houthalen-Helchteren is filled with 16 million tonnes of municipal and industrial waste, from which slag, steel, copper and other metals are being recouped to be used again. In addition, combustible material is being transformed into energy through the application of high-temperature plasma technology. This innovation has the potential to generate enough energy for up to 200 000 families for 20 years. When all the waste has been mined and reused the site will be turned into a sustainable nature reserve.

CtC paved the way for the New-Mine Horizon 2020 project which is establishing an EU training network that is looking into ways of recovering resources from landfill.

More for less

The objective is to extract maximum value and use from raw materials, products and waste. In turn, this will provide savings in energy usage and cut greenhouse gas emissions, both of which are EU priorities. Thus, the circular economy promotes waste prevention and stresses the need for more recycling and reuse while reducing landfill and incineration operations.

The EU's Cohesion Policy can play a pivotal part in making the circular economy a reality. For the period 2014-2020, a significant amount of funding has been set aside to support waste





^ The Ljubljana Regional Waste Management Centre is improving recycling and helping to make waste collection sustainable

management, innovation, resource efficiency, SME competitiveness and low carbon investments – all of which have important roles in building the circular economy.

In total, around EUR 150 billion in Cohesion Policy funding can be deployed to create a sustainable, environment-friendly economic future. These resources will be complemented by other EU funding streams from programmes such as Horizon 2020, LIFE and COSME. In addition, these large investments will draw in private-sector finance and expertise.

Better waste management

From these resources, around EUR 5.5 billion has been allocated to improve waste management across Europe. The goal is to develop waste-treatment options which centre around waste prevention, reuse and recycling. Money has also been set aside to improve waste-treatment infrastructure in the EU's less-developed regions. In all, these investments should create an extra 5.9 million tonnes per year of waste-recycling capacity.

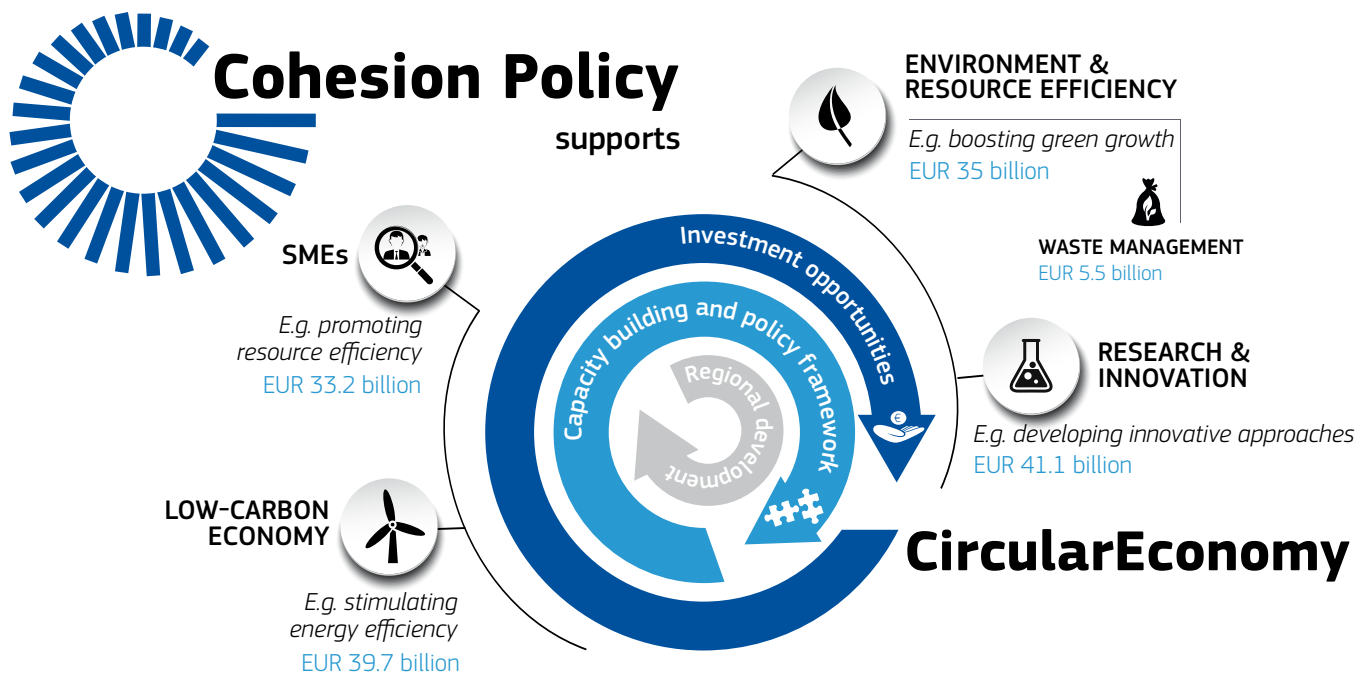
Making the best use of existing waste is a central plank of the circular economy. Cohesion Policy is allocating around EUR 2.3 billion to invest in environmentally friendly production processes and to help SMEs use resources more efficiently.

SLOVENIA PROMOTES SUSTAINABILITY

Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, has made a huge commitment to sustainable waste management practices – a notable effort which contributed to it recently being awarded the title of European Green Capital 2016 by the European Commission. Since joining the EU, the city has reduced the amount of waste it sends to landfill by 59% while investing in waste prevention and reuse strategies. It currently generates 41% less waste per capita than the European average. Ljubljana's Regional Waste Management Centre plays a key role in this success. The state-of-the-art facility, which serves 37 municipalities, sorts, processes and treats all kinds of waste and produces biogas for electricity and heating.

There is also scope to support the development of products which last longer, and that can be easily repaired or recycled. In addition, new products are appearing on the market which are made from recyclable and reclaimed materials. Continued innovation in the growing area of 'upcycling' also looks set to receive Cohesion Policy backing.

Funding is also supporting improvements in the water sector with EUR 15 billion allocated from Cohesion Policy between 2014 and 2020. Investments can be used to improve wastewater treatment and to help communities make water go further by, for example, using treated wastewater for irrigating parkland and street cleaning. >



Supporting research and innovation

Through their smart specialisation strategies, regions in all Member States have selected priority areas that can help them move towards a circular economy. Research and innovation priorities can vary according to each region's strengths, but may include developing the bio-economy, taking steps towards the introduction of composite materials, or overhauling production processes to make them more efficient.

The European Commission supports regions through, for example, the Smart Specialisation Platform which provides professional advice on the design and implementation of their research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation. The platform also helps facilitate interregional cooperation on issues related to innovation for the circular economy – and in specific areas like industrial modernisation.

Well-defined strategy

Organisations that are interested in securing Cohesion Policy funding must demonstrate that they have a strategic approach. This implies that investments in waste must adhere

to waste management plans; and national and regional strategies for smart specialisation should reinforce investments in innovation.

The Commission can provide technical assistance to support Member States, regions and cities as they prepare such strategies and put them in place. Help is also available to reinforce local and regional authorities to ensure there are no administrative obstacles to developing the circular economy.

SHARED AWARENESS

Moving forward, Cohesion Policy support for platforms and networks will help to build a more sustainable economy. In Ireland, one such platform has helped SMEs improve their waste-management practices and to reduce purchasing costs. The SMILE Resource Exchange offers a free service for businesses which encourages them to exchange various products to save money, cut landfill waste and develop new business opportunities. The goods on offer could be almost anything – from surplus fabrics that can be used as arts, craft or educational materials for children, through to unwanted light fittings which would otherwise be discarded in landfill.

TACKLING WASTE AT SEA

The Circular Ocean project, another RegioStars finalist, seeks to find alternative uses for discarded fishing nets and ropes in the Northern Periphery and Arctic region. To that end, the project team is pilot testing new products made from nets, including reinforced concrete, brick tiles and roof insulation. Tests are also being carried out on the use of fishing nets to remove pollutants from water. These practical applications will help reduce the 12.7 million tonnes of plastic waste that finds its way into the oceans every year, while upcycling redundant products.

In addition, further actions may also be required to create the right conditions for the circular economy. Providing the workforce with the appropriate training and skills must be a priority, and private financing has to be sourced to complement public investment in technology, processes and infrastructure. In particular, SMEs and social enterprises need support to enable them to thrive in the circular economy.

There is also scope for cooperation across borders to maximise the circular economy's impact. For example, EU-funded projects that create synergies between regions and industries, raise awareness and disseminate best practice have an important role to play.

Moreover, because the circular economy is an integral part of the Urban Agenda for the EU, cities will work alongside the Commission and other partners on issues such as waste management, resource efficiency and the sharing economy. ■

FIND OUT MORE

EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy: eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0614

Towards a circular economy: ec.europa.eu/priorities/jobs-growth-investment/circular-economy/index_en.htm

EFFICIENT RESOURCING

Eight partners from six countries have come together to promote the efficient use of resources in central Europe. The Presource project helps SMEs to optimise their production processes and thereby cut down on waste. The project team has developed an 'EDIT Value tool', which provides companies with a three-step methodology by which to analyse their materials and energy usage – as well as their product life cycles – before providing appropriate improvements. Presource also provides co-financing for eco-innovation and has launched a competence platform to share its results across Europe.

DEVELOPING THE BIOECONOMY

A campus which brings together more than 100 researchers and scientists is helping rural regions with low population density become less dependent on energy and raw materials. The BioCentre, based in northern Portugal, is developing new products and technologies which will give the circular economy a boost. It is one of the finalists of the 2016 RegioStars Awards for outstanding regional projects.

The campus has had huge success already, creating more than 20 R&D projects and six start-ups. BioCentre experts work across a range of disciplines and have come up with a host of cutting-edge applications. For example, bio-refinery units are being developed for the production of petroleum substitutes. Meanwhile, one project has found a way to reuse wastewater from a cheese factory, while another is examining the use of biomass ashes to improve degraded soils.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

PANORAMA
welcomes your
contributions!

In Your Own Words is the section of *Panorama* where stakeholders at local, regional, national and European level give their views and outline their plans for the 2014-2020 period.

Panorama welcomes your contributions in your language, which we may feature in future editions. Please contact us for further information about deadlines and guidelines for your contribution. regio-panorama@ec.europa.eu



EU STRUCTURAL FUNDS PRODUCE RESULTS – IF THE INNOVATION SYSTEM WORKS!

^ Oulu, Finland

Finland joined the European Union in 1995 and consequently became eligible to employ the Structural Funds. These funds have been used effectively by virtue of our innovation system, at the core of which is the University of Oulu.

Oulu region is the second northernmost region in Finland. Until the 1940s, agriculture and forestry, along with industries based on them, were the main sources of income. A strong period of industrialisation began after the Second World War: new hydroelectric power plants were constructed, the metal industry was introduced to the region, and efficient methods for using forests were developed. The most significant decision was made in 1958 when the University of Oulu was founded. Its role in diversifying economic structures, improving competence levels and as an incubator of innovation has been a real success story.

Wireless data-transfer systems are a key sector in Oulu's ICT industry. The innovation system in the current ICT scene is and

will remain cutting-edge. The Structural Funds have supported the preconditions in this field initiated by the University of Oulu, Finland's VTT Technical Research Centre and the Oulu University of Applied Sciences. An established research environment centred on fifth generation data transfer will ensure that our businesses remain at the forefront of ICT development.

These three institutions have developed a technology that can produce printed microchips, thereby creating an entirely new and innovative industry in the region. As a result, several growing start-up businesses have been founded. The sustained support delivered by Structural Funds has had a clear and tangible impact.

Oulu region is geographically large. Important industrial activity takes place also outside Oulu, which is the region's capital. Oulu Southern Institute – a department of the University of Oulu – is conducting research into high-strength metals and their applications in metal structures. This project is generating information about the suitability of high-strength metals for engineering workshops and their products. These metals enable the production of



lighter metal parts, which usually results in greater energy efficiency.

The wood product industry is also relatively strong in our region. The city of Pudasjärvi, with help from the University of Oulu, has started a project on the application of logs in modern cities. The aim is to expand the opportunities for log use because wood is an ecological and renewable natural resource.

The key element in the effective use of Structural Funds is the regional innovation system. Together, the University of

Oulu, the regional universities of applied sciences, the presence of the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, an active business environment and municipal development organisations make this possible. Without this network of development organisations, the effective use of the Structural Funds would be difficult. ■

HEIKKI OJALA

*Regional Development Manager,
Council of Oulu region, Finland*



EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE OF ESI FUNDS IN PORTUGAL

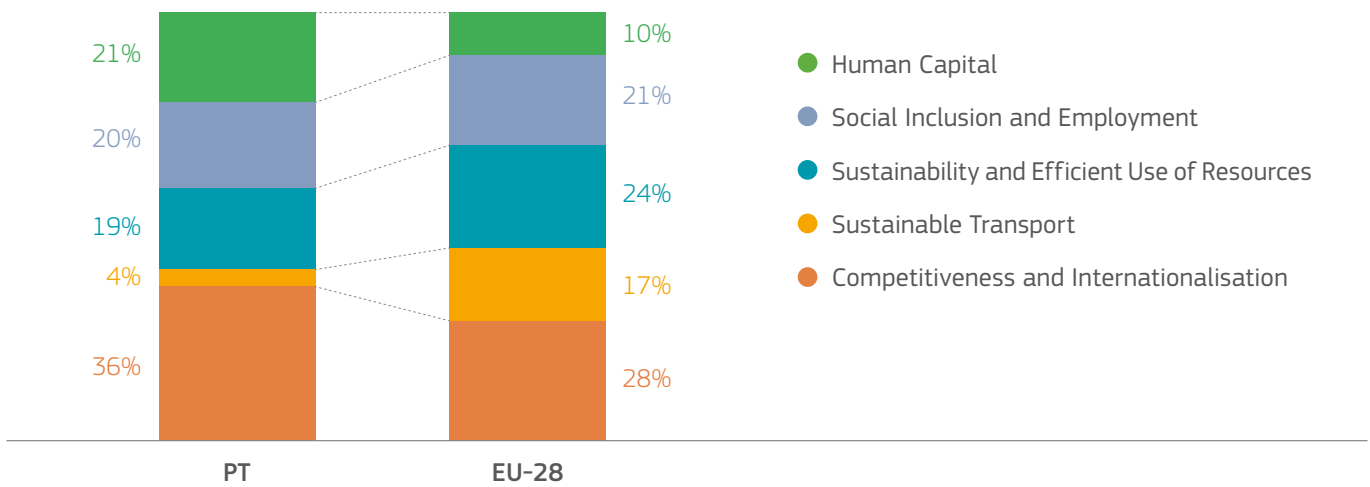
^ Lisbon, Portugal

The European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds play a crucial role in Portugal by promoting research, innovation and entrepreneurship and developing the skills to close qualification gaps and boost employment. Portugal 2020, the Portuguese Partnership Agreement, will continue to focus on overcoming structural constraints in the country, in line with the European added value of Cohesion Policy.

Following the introduction of territorial cohesion in the Lisbon Treaty, Cohesion Policy has placed a greater emphasis on sustainability and territorial analysis, in line with the EU's political agenda. In this context, the role of the ESI Funds is of the utmost importance. The recent economic crisis has posed new challenges concerning governance, the efficient use of resources, and the effectiveness of policies, indicating a return to the European added value of EU policies.



COHESION POLICY PRIORITIES IN 2014-2020 PORTUGAL vs. EU-28



Portugal's priority investment areas in the 2014-2020 period include boosting competitiveness by stimulating the production of tradable goods and services, promoting employment, particularly among young people, broadening skills and qualifications, reducing poverty, modernising public administration, and promoting energy efficiency and environmental practices.

Within this framework, innovation and qualifications for the working population are vital to overcome restrictions on Portugal's competitiveness. Thus, as in previous funding periods, they are priority funding intervention areas – in the 2014-2020 period, 57% of the total cohesion funds are allocated to competitiveness (36%) and human capital (21%), compared to 37% in the EU-28 (27% and 10% respectively).

Promoting competitiveness and tackling unemployment requires better levels of education and training and matching skills and competences to labour market demands. In this respect, reducing Portugal's school dropout rate (over 40% in 2000) has been a priority in the application of ESI Funds.

The use of European funds for vocational training, especially in promoting vocational pathways and dual-certification modalities at school, particularly among children from disadvantaged backgrounds, together with upgrading educational infrastructures, has contributed to a remarkable drop in this rate to 14% in 2015 (11% in the EU-28) in line with the Europe 2020 strategy goals.

Another challenge is to stimulate research, innovation and the transfer of knowledge, which are essential for creating jobs and generating economic value. According to the European Innovation Scoreboard 2016, Portugal has a 'moderate

innovator' profile, performing below the EU average as the result of insufficient coordination between companies and R&D entities, a low level of patenting and poor absorption of skills. However, in the 2008-2015 period, the country's performance improved, reaching the European average in 'innovators', 'open, excellent and attractive research systems' and 'finance and support'. As regards 'human capital', Portugal's performance is higher than the EU average, while expenditure on R&D as a percentage of GDP also rose to 1.3% in 2014 (2% in the EU-28).

Structural Funds have proved critical to these achievements. Similarly, Portugal 2020 is reinforcing this focus on tools to promote R&D and the transfer of knowledge to the business sector to increase competitiveness and added value, while strengthening the tradable orientation of the Portuguese economy.

The continuing implementation of Cohesion Policy in innovation and education and training for the working population demonstrates its European added value in promoting growth and job creation in Portugal, thereby helping to strengthen the single market with significant knock-on effects for other economies across EU regions and territories.

The adaptability of Cohesion Policy to the diversity of needs and potential across EU territories (subsidiarity and place-based), alongside its promotion of a multi-level governance model based on the partnership principle, also makes this EU policy one of the most visible representations of the results of European integration for all territories and their populations. ■

DUARTE RODRIGUES

Vice-President of the Board, Cohesion and Development Agency, Portugal



FOSTER¹: FACILITATING ACCESS TO FINANCING FOR ALL REGIONAL COMPANIES

^ Carcassonne, France

As part of EU Cohesion Policy, the Languedoc Roussillon Midi Pyrénées region is the first in Europe to work with the European Investment Fund (EIF) to roll out tools devoted to all regional VSEs-SMEs in all economic sectors.

Following recommendations in the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020, the Languedoc Roussillon Midi Pyrénées region, which is responsible for managing a large proportion of EU funds allocated to the area, took on the challenge of accessing financing for VSEs-SMEs (Very small enterprises – small and medium-sized enterprises). It achieved this by mobilising public funds (both regional and European) to leverage private investment from banks and investors to help regional companies to develop and to support their development projects.

In 2008, it used this type of investment fund, known as JEREMIE, for the first time, to secure EUR 15 million from the region and EUR 15 million from the European Regional Development Fund for 1370 VSEs-SMEs, representing 15 000 jobs and a total of EUR 172 million, equating to leverage of 5.8 x.

Building on this success, at the end of 2015, the Languedoc Roussillon Midi Pyrénées region extended the initiative, working with the EU to roll out a second intervention fund called 'FOSTER TPE-PME'. This provided EUR 52 million, with EUR 20.35 million coming from the region and the rest from the EU (EUR 22.2 million from the ERDF and EUR 9.45 million from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development), once again in partnership with the EIF.



The aim is to inject EUR 214 million into around 2400 regional firms and project leaders, thereby reaching more companies, particularly very small enterprises



^ Compufirst, beneficiary of the EU fund 'JEREMIE'

¹ FOSTER: FOnDs de SouTien des Entreprises Régionales (Support fund for regional companies)

(with fewer than 10 employees), and opening up the initiative to agricultural, forestry and agri-food businesses and companies. It is expected that leverage of 3 to 5 times the public contribution will be achieved.

The financial intermediaries that will implement FOSTER TPE-PME will be selected via four calls for expressions of interest launched in July 2016 (http://www.eif.org/what_we_do/resources/foster/index.htm). Applicants have until 30 September 2016 to respond to one or other of the four planned instruments:

➤ Risk-sharing loans, with EUR 3.5 million to support innovative companies in their creation and development;

- Co-investment targeting venture capital and development capital, with EUR 15 million to boost equity financing for SMEs with strong potential for development;
- Bank guarantees of EUR 20 million, in particular targeting companies in the initial stages of development and SMEs, of which there are very many in the region, with loans that can be less than EUR 25 000;
- Bank guarantees for final recipients in the agricultural sector, with EUR 15 million. ■

CAROLE DELGA

*President of the Languedoc Roussillon
Midi Pyrénées region, France*



STOCKHOLM REGION INVESTS IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

^ *Stockholm, Sweden*

The Stockholm Region is Europe's fastest growing metropolitan and capital region. Over the last decade, the county's population has increased annually by 35 000 to 40 000 people.

To meet the needs of this growing population, the Stockholm Region must build 16 000 new homes each year, a challenge it wants to take as an opportunity to promote sustainable urban development. To accomplish this, it is using

Structural Funds to invest in a green, healthy, smart, attractive and inclusive city.

The region has recently decided to invest in two development projects to a total of SEK 120 million to reinforce sustainable housebuilding: 'Grön BoStad Stockholm' and 'Sverige bygger nytt'. These two projects, half of which is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund, concern key elements of sustainable urban development. The Stockholm Region aims to benefit from the

expertise found in environmental technology companies and to promote innovation and sustainable growth. Furthermore, it believes there is untapped potential for labour among recently arrived immigrants and non-native citizens, which the growing construction sector should take advantage of.

Through the Grön BoStad Stockholm project, the Royal Institute of Technology, among others, will develop test beds for innovation in environmental technology companies. The objective is to create openings for the development and use of new energy efficiency and low-carbon technology in construction projects in Stockholm County's municipalities. Efforts will both involve and strengthen the environmental technology sector, as well as engaging clients, such as municipalities, district administrations and property owners, etc., and helping to raise awareness in the area.



In the Sverige bygger nytt project, the Swedish Public Employment Service, together with several municipalities, district administrations, industry associations and trade unions, will promote wider recruitment and strengthen the provision and matching of skills in the construction sector by making use of the competences of recently arrived immigrants and non-native citizens. Work on core values, validation of skills, language support and workplace-based learning will be strengthened and better matched with jobs in occupations facing shortages in the construction sector.

Development projects underline the desire in the Stockholm Region that the European Structural and Investment Funds should contribute to coherent strategic initiatives. This is achieved by concentrating resources, focusing on business and labour, creating synergy through the funds and by using 'the Stockholm model' – a new model for the implementation of funding.

This new governance model means that Cohesion Policy is more closely linked to overall regional growth policy and its resources in the county, and contributes to greater interaction and support among regional players to create coherent strategic initiatives whereby they take both the initiative and ownership of their efforts. In this way, although the Structural Funds' budget in the Stockholm Region is among the lowest in Europe, the region will still be able to launch and implement large and important projects. ■

JONAS ÖRTQUIST

*Head of Secretariat, Partnership for the Structural Funds,
County of Stockholm, Sweden*

CAPTURED ON CAMERA

In June this year, the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy organised 'EU project, my project 2016' across Slovenia. *Panorama* has captured a flavour of the 5000 projects Slovenia has implemented since 2004 with the help of EUR 4.4 billion in funding. Under the slogan 'Investing in your future', these projects have helped improve citizens' living conditions and narrowed the gap between the regions, enhanced innovation and competitiveness, boosted Slovenia's added value in business, protected water resources and cultural heritage, and exploited cross-border entrepreneurial potential.



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08



13



09



14



10



11



12

- 01 Department of Wood Science and Technology in the Biotechnical Faculty at Ljubljana University
- 02 Prioritising sustainable tourism in rural border regions
- 03 Encouraging a socially responsible approach to green products and services
- 04 Building an innovative, numerical simulation environment
- 05 Modernisation of the Pragersko-HODOŠ railway line
- 06 Nurturing eco-social farm roots
- 07 Refurbishment of the cultural HOME PLANT centre includes a digitised cinema
- 08 Energy rehabilitation scheme in the Rajka Hrastnik primary school
- 09 CUL-ENERGY 4 KIDS includes sustainable energy concepts for playgrounds
- 10 Investing in the infrastructure at Maribor Airport
- 11 The Škofja Loka Poljanska ring road skirts the medieval city
- 12 Preserving biodiversity in Kolpa border region
- 13 Renovation of the Dominican monastery in Ptuj
- 14 A new wastewater treatment plant supplies drinking water to the Šaleška Valley

FIND OUT MORE

<http://www.eu-skladi.si/sl/aktualno/izbrani-projekti>

SMART REGIONS Conference

DRIVING SMART SPECIALISATION INVESTMENTS IN PRIORITY AREAS FOR EUROPEAN GROWTH

The SMART REGIONS Conference – organised by Commissioner Crețu and her services in DG Regional and Urban Policy – took place in Brussels on 1 and 2 June 2016. It followed up on an earlier milestone event, ‘Regions as motors of new growth through smart specialisation – matching strategies for common goals’, held in 2013.

European Commission Vice-President Jyrki Katainen, Commissioners Elżbieta Bieńkowska and Tibor Navracsics, and Directors-General Walter Deffaa and Robert-Jan Smits joined leading smart specialisation experts at the event which highlighted innovative regional strategies and cooperation



At the conference exhibition, regions could showcase their RIS3 areas and look for partners to co-create new value networks

MAIN POLICY MESSAGES

1. We now implement smart specialisation strategies in partnership with more than 120 EU regions/countries. We use research, innovation and their links to business as drivers of regional development, based on strengths in regions and cooperation between them.
2. Smart specialisation investments also contribute to the European Investment Plan. The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the European Fund for Strategic Investments (ESFI) work together to support public and private investments in these priority areas.
3. Thematic smart specialisation platforms support committed regions to team up and coordinate their investment in smart specialisation priority areas. They work, for example, on project pipelines; cluster partnerships to scale-up regional efforts at European level; exchange of good practice; and technical support.

between EU regions, and how they can be applied to boost growth and competitiveness in Europe.

The aim of the conference was:

- to showcase successes and recent work;
- to discuss the best way forward to accelerate the implementation of smart specialisation strategies;
- and to put concrete support in place for future work together.

In addition, thematic smart specialisation platforms for energy, agro-food, and industrial modernisation were launched.

The programme covered three parts:

- The most recent developments in regional smart specialisation, with experts and practical cases from Pomorskie (Poland), Andalusia (Spain), Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (France) and Tampere (Finland);
- An interactive session identifying concrete areas of cooperation in the new smart specialisation platforms on energy, agri-food, and industrial modernisation, the goal being to co-invest in these areas. This is inspired

> *Jyrki Katainen, European Commission Vice-President, described how each region in Europe can specialise smartly and achieve excellence by investing in priority areas through smart specialisation strategies*

by the Vanguard Initiative, a group of EU regions aiming to build world-class clusters and cluster networks, in particular through pilots and joint demonstrators (<http://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/>);

- > A high-level policy discussion among participants and Commissioners.

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE UPCOMING SMART SPECIALISATION EVENTS

- > 28-30 September: 1st SMARTER conference on smart specialisation and territorial development, Seville (ES)
- > 10-13 October: European Week of Regions and Cities, Brussels (BE)
- > 3-4 November: Annual forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region: 'Innovative flows - water, knowledge and innovation in the Danube Region', Bratislava (SK)
- > 8-9 November: Annual forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: 'One region, one future - vision 2030', Stockholm (SE)
- > 16-17 November: Industrial modernisation - follow-up, Barcelona (ES)
- > 30 November - 2 December: The European Cluster Conference, Brussels (BE)
- > 2017: Europe-wide conference on smart specialisation.

Conference highlights included a speech by **Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-President of the European Commission, emphasising the link between smart specialisation strategies and the European Investment Plan: "That is what the thematic smart specialisation platforms that we launch today are really about: investment project pipelines attracting around related smart specialisation areas the investors, entrepreneurs and innovators."

Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, launched the smart specialisation platform for industrial modernisation, a joint initiative with Corina Crețu, Commissioner for Regional Policy. This will help regions across Europe to establish links with



business and research communities active in areas related to industrial modernisation, such as key enabling technologies, service innovation and resource efficiency.

Walter Deffaa, Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy, underlined that smart strategies are key to 21st century EU growth. Such strategies use the "entrepreneurial discovery process" among researchers, businesses, civil society and different strands of the public sector to plan and implement together how a region or country best uses its potential and knowledge, and how to commercialise its innovation successes.

Participants also looked at international experiences in smart specialisation with **Charles Sabel**, Professor of Law and Social Science at the Columbia Law School (USA) and **Jaime del Castillo**, European expert on Latin American growth opportunities. Professor Sabel delivered a frank analysis of the governance challenges facing smart specialisation, with an emphasis on diagnostic and problem-solving monitoring, correcting errors and adapting to changing environments while implementing projects and programmes.

The conference closed with conclusions presented by **Walter Deffaa** and **Robert-Jan Smits**. ■

FIND OUT MORE

Marek Przeor, Team Leader Smart Growth, Competence Centre Smart and Sustainable Growth, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy: Marek.Przeor@ec.europa.eu
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/conferences/smart-regions/
<http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

Apulia: a growing attraction

Apulia is one of five less-developed regions in Italy which has benefited significantly from Cohesion Policy funding in the past and plans to continue this trend in the programming period 2014-2020.

INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN APULIA USING EU FUNDS

Supporting the competitiveness of the entrepreneurial system is crucial in the context of regional economic development and improving the quality of life. It is particularly important for the recovery of the productivity system and the propensity to invest in encouraging innovation and opening up markets, including via integrated investments that rely on industrial research and public-private partnership.

Successful results so far have led to further changes and the empowerment of an industrial policy for a new cycle of EU funding for 2014-2020. Apulia's regional industrial policy has focused primarily on creating incentives for investment and promoting access to credit.

On the one hand, programme contracts and integrated aid programmes have been introduced, along with support for initial investments by micro-sized and small enterprises in the tourism industry. Other incentives include micro-enterprise start-ups created by disadvantaged people, support for innovation enterprises (both new and existing), support for investments by local media SMEs, and support for investments in productive suburban areas.

On the other hand, support has been activated in the form of guarantees, counter-guarantees and co-guarantees for SMEs.

Overall, support has helped achieve the following results:

- › Financing for more than 11 000 enterprises
- › Over EUR 1 billion in public aid
- › Around EUR 4 billion in financed investments
- › More than 27 000 operational work units.

In the first year of implementing the 2014-2020 programme (as of July 2016), the initiatives in force have resulted in:

- › 2056 initiatives applied
- › Over EUR 1.1 billion in investments
- › More than EUR 418 million in requested aid
- › More than 32 000 operational work units.

Apulia is one of Italy's most attractive regions for industrial investments. Applications are also being submitted by foreign groups from Germany, the USA and India, which represent more than half the value of the overall demand for programme contracts. The industrial projects also come from Italian multinational companies.

Thanks to EU funding, the regional industrial policy also provides for interventions aimed at supporting human capital and the reclassification of productive settlement areas.

The region of Apulia – perhaps better known abroad as Puglia – stretches 400 kilometres from north to south along the ‘heel’ of Italy’s ‘boot’. It is a magnet for tourists, flocking to the area on low-cost flights into Bari and Brindisi airports, to soak up the sun and sea and to make the most of an area rich in natural beauty, history and architecture.

Cohesion Policy plays a key role in a region such as Apulia. In August 2015, the European Commission adopted the Operational Programme (OP) for Apulia with EUR 7.12 billion. Of this, EUR 3.56 billion will come from the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund, and will be matched by national co-financing. In line with the main investment priorities set out for Italy, the funding will focus on:

- Boosting the real economy by supporting an innovation-friendly business environment, competitiveness, SMEs, R&D, and the digital agenda;
- Putting in place high-performance and sustainable infrastructures, more efficient management of natural resources and the environment, better transport connections and the transition to a low-carbon economy;
- Improving social services and education by promoting social inclusion and combatting poverty, fostering education and training towards the job market, and supporting labour mobility and access to employment.

On the adoption of the OP, Corina Crețu, Commissioner for Regional Policy, said: "I warmly welcome the adoption of this ambitious programme. It will unlock a large-scale investment that will create a favourable environment for innovation and entrepreneurship, thereby creating thousands of jobs. It will also boost the attractiveness of the region and improve the quality of life of its citizens."

EUSAIR

Apulia is also part of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region which interconnects the marine, coastal and territorial areas of four EU Member States, including Italy, and four non-EU countries. Home to over 70 million people,



DIRITTI A SCUOLA: A CLASS ACT

At the 2015 RegioStars award ceremony, the Diritti a Scuola project came top of the class in the Inclusive Growth category: Integrating in society those at risk of social exclusion. The project was acknowledged for its approach to keeping children in school by means of various preventative actions mainly targeting primary school children and those completing their first two years in secondary education. It also prioritised children with disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and focused in particular on schools with the highest drop-out rates.

By combining education and social care, the project provided counselling, educational guidance and intercultural mediation, to the benefit of both students and their families and significantly reducing the numbers of students leaving school early. The dedicated help desk delivered counselling and information services to around one-third of the students in the project schools (+/- 50 000) and 10 000 families. In particular, migrant students and their families were helped with issues concerning social exclusion and integration.

TOTAL COST: EUR 140.48 MILLION
EU CONTRIBUTION: EUR 75.23 MILLION

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/italy/tackling-school-drop-out-rates-and-improving-results

Apulia

Population

4 050 803 (2013), representing 6.8% of the national total.

Labour market

In 2013, just under 46% of the population was in employment as against 59.8% of the national average (EU 68.3%); unemployment stood at 19.8% (national 12.2%, EU 10.8%) with youth unemployment (under 25 years) reaching 49.7% (national 40.0%, EU 23.5%).

Economy

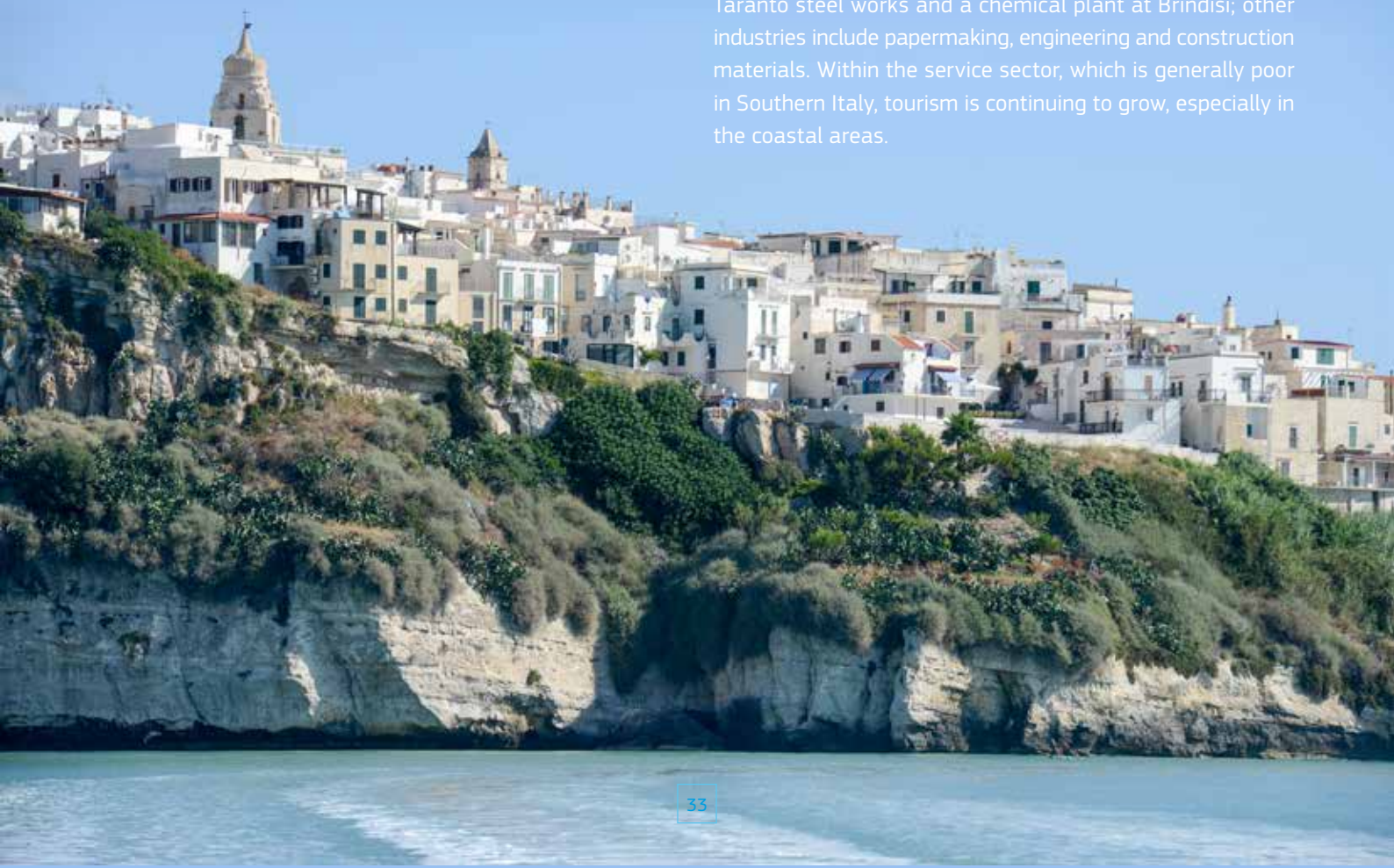
The region lags behind the national and EU economy in economic development: 66.8% of average GDP per capita in PPS EU-28, with productivity at 94.8% as against 110.8% in Italy. The main sector indicators as % of national GVA (gross value added) are services (26.5), financial and other activities (25.7), trade and transport (22.5), industry (13.4), construction (8.1) and agriculture (3.7).

Smart specialisations

Apulia is considered to be the most dynamic region in Southern Italy and, although investment in R&D is below the national average, regional authorities have recently promoted several initiatives in support of innovation activity in the region. Innovation policy focuses on the creation of productive and technological districts, networking between research institutions and on human capital training. Along with Emilia-Romagna, Apulia was the first Italian region to implement a smart specialisation strategy.

Other key sectors

Agriculture is much more important in economic terms in Apulia than in the rest of Italy. It is an export leader of wheat, olive oil and tomatoes. Sheep are the only important livestock, but the region claims the fourth highest fishing catch in the country. The greatest manufacturing specialisations concern food products, textiles and metal products. The industrial sector is highly developed in the south with the Taranto steel works and a chemical plant at Brindisi; other industries include papermaking, engineering and construction materials. Within the service sector, which is generally poor in Southern Italy, tourism is continuing to grow, especially in the coastal areas.



APULIA – BIG AMBITIONS, STRONG SUPPORT

Michele Emiliano, President of the Apulia Region Administration Chairman, gives *Panorama* an insight into the importance of Cohesion Policy in this Italian region.

How can Cohesion Policy help Apulia develop economically, and what in your view are the priority areas?

Although the above-mentioned data highlight how central EU actions are helping to reduce domestic growth gaps, there are also a number of aspects underlining the fact that Europe is going through a delicate stage as regards its future. There is a strong demand for tighter cohesion and more focus on everyday issues in many countries, which require greater efforts towards political unification (a major topic) along with economic and monetary unification. In this respect, the role of cohesion policy is key, even more so than in the past.

When discussing our future after 2020, we cannot forget the local regions where there are higher imbalances and shortfalls, and tens of millions of citizens are living in conditions of strong economic, employment and social disadvantage due to causes beyond their control – above all, with fewer growth opportunities. As Pope Francis emphasised during his visit to the European Parliament in 2014, the whole of Europe must combat

citizens' distrust towards institutions that are considered to be distant and working to establish rules which are perceived as being far from the feelings of the population. The great ideals that inspired a United Europe must be put at the heart of everyday actions once again.

Cohesion, sharing and listening to the demands of citizens are ideals that must be promoted again, while moving the technicalities of EU institutions into the background. We should associate the future with hope, starting with the younger generation. We must regain trust in order to strive for a united, peaceful, sympathetic, mutual and proactive Europe. In this respect, we should not forget the lessons of men such as Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Alcide De Gasperi and Altiero Spinelli who conveyed the values we have to build on with new vigour and enthusiasm. Today, Apulia is strongly committed to reinforcing European ideals and promoting new development policies in the areas of welfare, environment and the economy. The Structural Funds for the 2014-2020 programming period will help us reach these goals across our local region.

What are the pros and cons of this new approach related to integrating funds and financial instruments? How can concreteness and complementarity be assured?

Building on opportunities from the green economy, improving the skills of workers and entrepreneurs, supporting smart qualifications and specialisation strategies while primarily creating new job opportunities for young people, increasing social inclusion and the fight against new social and economic poverty: these are the major goals requiring increasingly integrated instruments that are closer to real needs. We are starting from capabilities and experiences that are already established. These have turned Apulia into one of the most virtuous regions as regards the use of EU funds and will enable us to further improve the use of funds and financial engineering instruments.

In particular, positive results are coming from investment support for smaller enterprises, whereby plant and equipment expenditure subsidies can be combined with guarantees provided by Credit Limit Joint Guarantee Partnerships (using public resources) to facilitate access to credit. Further positive examples include integrating productive investment support and workers' voca-

tional training plans, enterprise start-up assistance for younger people (NIDI - Nuove iniziative d'impresa; New Enterprise Start-Up Initiatives - NESUI) and PIN - Pugliesi Innovativi; Innovative Apulians - IA) and microloans for smaller enterprises (even freelance professionals can already benefit from the first and the last instruments).

There is an overarching question with respect to using EU funds focusing on simplification. How can regions contribute to this end?

Certainly by disseminating knowledge about EU regulations to a greater extent. When beneficiaries have insufficient knowledge of procedures, implementation processes and times are extended and, as a result, may not be compatible with reporting times for the expenditure of EU funds. However, in other respects, it should be emphasised that greater efforts are needed at the EU level for simplifying various aspects relating to management and control. Considerable progress has been made but there is still work to do.

In addition, we should not forget that simplification must also be achieved through a consistent and integrated approach to EU legislation and legislation adopted by individual Member States. This is a very important point when, for example, various local and national administration bodies transpose directives related to public procurement, as well as authorisation procedures. For instance, Italy has recently approved the new Public Procurement Consolidation Act. We hope that this act will concretely



help to simplify procedures and shorten implementation times for public investments: which still rank among the longest periods in Europe.

What results do you expect at the end of the 2014-2020 period?

The purpose of the 2014-2020 programming period is to make Apulia increasingly innovative, attractive and sustainable both in a social and economic perspective and an environmental one. We want our local region to be able to attract stronger productive investments and more tourist stays by improving living standards for both citizens and visitors. In addition, we want it to become increasingly inclusive for the most disadvantaged population categories through targeted and integrated services for welfare and active labour policies. For this reason, we have planned considerable investment in the smart qualification and specialisation strategy, as well as in enhancing the green economy and transport facilities and primarily improving skills. We want our local region to be increasingly attractive for young Apulians and for

other young people coming from outside Apulia, as high living standards go hand in hand with a high-quality university system and a strongly dynamic and proactive enterprise structure.

Apulia is one of the regions in the Adriatic and Ionian macro-strategy. What are your expectations in this regard?

The Adriatic and Ionian macro-strategy, along with other regional cooperation programmes, plays a crucial role in countering EU scepticism, starting with cooperation in respect to matters of common interest. Macro-regions are a preferential environment for local stakeholders to directly participate in the decisions that most concern them, on a supra-regional and supra-national scale. Meanwhile, they leave broad margins for cohesion, vertical and horizontal subsidiarity policies. The Adriatic area in particular needs to strengthen integration and sharing processes as regards important choices such as those relating to the environment, economy, infrastructure and facilities and culture. Cooperation between regions is both useful and beneficial for Europe since it proves that the culture of dialogue and participation is the only one that is able to foster growth and the development of the local region, perhaps in a Europe that is more united and closer to its citizens. ■

FIND OUT MORE

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/news/2015/08/european-commission-adopts-eur7-billion-operational-programme-for-the-italian-region-of-puglia

HORIZON 2020 PROJECT: COHESIFY

What has the EU ever done for us?

Does EU funding make a difference to how EU citizens perceive the European Union?

From the evidence of the recent EU referendum in the United Kingdom, it would seem not. Regions like Cornwall and West Wales and the Valleys, two of the poorer EU regions which have received millions of euros from the ERDF and ESF, voted predominantly to leave.

Media and opinion polling research identified a range of factors to explain this apparent paradox. Communication may be one factor: the BBC noted the lack of visibility of EU signage and general awareness about EU funding in Cornwall¹. But other factors also played a part, with the perceived benefits of EU funding in Wales and elsewhere being outweighed by concerns over budgetary contributions, sovereignty, immigration or the economic situation in the UK and Europe².

The question of whether people think that EU funding has been good for their region's economic development and whether it influences their attitudes to the EU and European identity are at the heart of a new Horizon 2020 project called COHESIFY. The study will undertake the first in-depth research on the interrelationship between European identity, EU Cohesion Policy and communication in regions across Europe. It forms part of wider Horizon 2020 agenda which is exploring how to reconnect EU citizens with the Union and foster a common European identity to underpin EU legitimacy and European integration.

Public opinion post crisis

Eurobarometer survey data shows that European identity among EU citizens declined in the years after the economic crisis in 2007/8 but then recovered to pre-crisis levels in 2010.



COHESIFY

The impact of EU Cohesion Policy on European Identification



¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36054645>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jun/25/view-wales-town-showered-eu-cash-votes-leave-ebbw-vale>



^ Cornwall, one of the UK's poorer regions, has received significant ERDF and ESF funding

It reached an historical high in 2015, with over 50% of the citizens identifying with both their country and Europe for the first time. Political support for the EU has also recovered in recent years, although citizens' trust in the EU remains well below pre-crisis levels, and the impact of Brexit on the EU and public opinion remains to be seen.

While Cohesion Policy accounts for a major share of the EU budget and has been a key tool in addressing the effects of the crisis, less than 50% of EU citizens are aware of the European Regional Development Fund or Cohesion Fund and only a fifth of these consider that they have benefitted in their daily lives from EU-funded projects.

Professor John Bachtler, director of the European Policies Research Centre (University of Strathclyde) which is leading the COHESIFY consortium of 10 EU partners noted that: "Many Europeans consider that the EU is remote from their concerns. Policy decisions are taken in Brussels and funds are allocated via national and regional capitals in ways that are hardly understood by the citizens. If the EU is serious about re-connecting with its citizens, it needs a much better appreciation of what people think of the EU and its policies."

His colleague, Dr Carlos Mendez, COHESIFY project manager, added: "This study will involve talking to ordinary citizens in countries across the EU to find out what they think of the EU and the money it spends in their country, region or town."

Research methodologies

The COHESIFY consortium, comprising eight European universities and two SMEs, will conduct interdisciplinary research over two years and will apply different research methodologies, including focus groups and a representative survey among citizens; online surveys and in-depth interviews with Cohesion Policy stakeholders and communicators; content analysis of political party manifestos; and (social) media analysis. In addition, the current communication strategies or activities conducted by Member States and Managing Authorities will be analysed.

The research will be steered by an advisory board made up of communication and policy experts from DG Regional and Urban Policy, the Committee of the Regions, the Free University of Berlin and the Club of Venice.

In addition to developing new knowledge on the relationship between Cohesion Policy and European identity, the project aims to provide substantial policy recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of EU communication on Cohesion Policy. Initial results will emerge early in 2017, with the project ending in 2018 with the final reports, including publication of a handbook for EU communicators. ■

FIND OUT MORE

www.cohesify.eu



A bird's-eye view of European projects

As part of this year's Europe in my Region campaign, over 3000 projects in 23 countries opened their doors to more than 300 000 visitors to showcase just what EU regional projects are achieving.

Europe in My Region (EIMR) is an EU-wide communications campaign to encourage citizens to discover EU-funded projects near them. This year, for the first time, four different initiatives – the Open EU Project Days, a treasure hunt, a photo competition and a blog campaign – enabled the public to visit projects and share images and experiences via social media. The campaign is coordinated by DG REGIO and organised in cooperation with regional authorities.

Check out some of the photos from the thousands of events that took place across Europe from May until June 2016.

FIND OUT MORE

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/communication/inform-network/map/



Local enterprises – beneficiaries of EU-funded programmes across the region – gathered during the DIP Sliven event in Bulgaria.



Visitors to EIMR in Erfolgsgeschichten in Baden-Württemberg, Germany had a great opportunity to find out a lot more about EU-funded projects in their region.



Visitors to Luxembourg's annual Fête de l'Europe participated in various activities featuring the EU Member States, the European institutions, and four clusters focusing on growth and jobs; climate and the Energy Union; the Digital Single Market; and the EU as a stronger global actor.



Slovenian Minister Alenak Smerkolj (back row, second from the right) joined participants in an ESF-funded project ('Learning for young adults') during the Open EU Project Days in Koper, Slovenia.



The region of Thessaly in Greece staged a wide variety of interactive public events in areas where urban infrastructure and cultural projects have been implemented with EU support.



Open EU Project Days event in Lodzkie Voivodeship, Poland.



Smiling faces at the end of the treasure hunt in Fortaleza de Santiago, Sesimbra in Portugal.

Ensuring future political cohesion post-2020



Marjorie Jouen, an expert on EU policies related to regional, rural and local development, territorial cohesion and social innovation, and Special Adviser at Notre Europe - Jacques Delors Institute, gives her views on the way ahead for European cohesion.

Brexit is a reminder that the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was created in answer to a demand made by the United Kingdom after it had become a member of the European Economic Community. What a lot of water has passed under the bridge since 1975! I believe that the secret of this longevity lies in the fact that regional development policies are capable of undergoing a metamorphosis every time there is a reform, starting with the very one established by Cohesion Policy, the 30th anniversary of which we are celebrating this year.

Every programme is, in fact, characterised by a specific combination of tools and eligibility criteria for the territories most in need, in response to any threat to European cohesion during a given period. The challenge lies in anticipating problems that need to be resolved more than five years in advance. It is not a matter of starting from scratch, however, but of relying on existing structures in order to improve what we already have. The basic principles – joint administration and co-funding by the Member States and regions, as well as multi-annual and multi-sector programming – remain unchanged.

What should we retain from the 2014-2020 programme?

Two and a half years after its inception, we can learn a few lessons from the current programme which is characterised, in particular, by the need to resolve the economic crisis. The joint programme of the five European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), and their alignment in terms of what should constitute the priorities of the EU 2020 strategy, was drawn up in response to a desire for greater efficiency during a period of budgetary restriction. Stricter controls and conditions were put in place to guarantee the efficiency of the intervention tools under the “better spending” banner.

The other striking thing about this programme lay in the introduction of “territorial cohesion” as an objective, meaning that particular attention would be paid to infra-regional and supra-regional levels (urban, local and macro-regions) by providing them with new tools.

The European Commission drew up its first report¹ at the end of 2015. By noting that Cohesion Policy had not been able to prevent the economic crisis from wiping out “the gains from the economic convergence achieved in several European regions and Member States since 2000”, it also admits that the inadequate amounts at stake mean that it cannot constitute a genuine redistribution policy.

Conversely, and on a positive note, the characteristic governance of the funds – too rigid in the eyes of some – allowed them to play a ‘cushion role’ and sometimes to overcome the failure of national public investment. The optional recourse to new territorial development tools, such as integrated territorial investment (ITI), strategies for sustainable urban development and community-led local development (CLLD), would indicate that these are essentially experimental.

According to Fabrizio Barca’s territorialised social agenda², the programme succeeds in terms of better management of the ESIF for the regions, by putting forward CLLD for all types of territories and

¹ *Communication from the Commission ‘Investing in jobs and growth – maximising the contribution of European Structural and Investment Funds’, COM(2015) 639 final of 14 December 2015*

² *F. Barca, 2009, An agenda for a reformed cohesion policy*



recognising the existence of objectives other than those related to economic performance (energy and environmental transition, for example). However, no advances have been made in terms of social cohesion, namely employment and poverty. There has been little progress in “good governance”, although procedural complexity has advanced and, instead of territorialising sectoral policies, Cohesion Policy has been “sectoralised”.

What are the challenges facing cohesion after 2020?

The period of geopolitical chaos we are currently experiencing should not detract from the need for internal cohesion within a changed EU. These needs are not purely social, connected to professional activity and the revenue and repercussions of the single market, but increasingly societal – that is, related to people’s age, culture, health and education, etc. The territorial dimension is increasingly important as a point of reference for peaceful coexistence, inas-

much as most of the institutions and mechanisms behind social cohesion have either been dismantled (work, school, businesses etc.) or have vanished.

Thus, differences between small regions or territories (urban districts or rural areas) do not simply exist because of their economic competition and innovation profiles, but also because of their living conditions, social harmony and the general health of their democratic institutions.

Moreover, the unequal exposure of territories to scarce natural resources and climatic variability should mean that a decisive stage in the 2025 horizon can be reached in order to involve territories and populations in steps to ensure resilience.

Consequently, it is necessary:

› to base a substantial part of the allocation of funds (in the order of 30%), not on GDP per capita but on the European Social Progress Index (EU-SPI);

- › to review investment priorities by accommodating more objectives related to the inclusion of young people, preventing exclusion, enhancing resilience, improved living conditions, participatory democracy and social innovation, and creativity through the use of digital technology;
- › to reinforce and consolidate the use of integrated territorial development tools by making them mandatory;
- › to promote territorial competition as a method of implementing regional investment programmes between urban and rural districts, coastal and mountainous areas and local authorities, in addition to constituting a specific objective. ■

FIND OUT MORE

Notre Europe –
Jacques Delors Institute:
www.delorsinstitute.eu/1-Home.htm

MOOC: on course to explain EU budgets and funding

The Committee of the Region's (CoR) Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is the first of its kind to help regional and local authorities navigate policy-making in European Union affairs, with a focus on accessing EU funds and understanding budgets.

The first MOOC course, in 2015, gave a general introduction to the EU's institutional set-up and decision-making procedures, linked in particular to regional and local affairs. Over 50 experts, including local politicians and MEPs, high-level representatives from EU institutions, and university academics, shared their knowledge via videos and live debates web-streamed from CoR premises in Brussels.

Around 8500 participants from over 70 countries confirmed the MOOC's potential to strengthen administrative capacity at the local level, as well as the significant demand for online learning on EU affairs. Consequently, a second edition is planned from 31 October to 9 December, although it will remain accessible to 'latecomers' throughout 2017.

This year's course has been co-created by the European Investment Bank and two Directorates-General of the European Commission (Regional and Urban Policy, Budget).

The MOOC will comprise six main themes – each online for one week and requiring about two hours of study time – focusing on the EU budget and how it is spent. The course tools, including videos, live debates, factsheets and quizzes, will balance the basic theory behind EU funding, procedures and evaluation with hands-on information from practitioners on project design and delivery. The course will be available free at fun-mooc.fr, and participants can register at: <https://www.fun-mooc.fr/courses/CoR/114001/session01/about>.

TAKE 2

The second edition of MOOC aims to attract over 10000 participants, including:

- ›CoR members and regional and local politicians from the EU and beyond;
- ›Staff from EU institutions, regional offices in Brussels, associations, etc.;
- ›Officials from regional and local administrations involved in EU financial matters;
- ›Staff working for NGOs and other potential beneficiaries of EU funding;
- ›Staff working for financial institutions such as (regional) promotional banks;
- ›Teachers, students and journalists.

Module 1 will present the role of regions and cities in EU affairs, with a focus on financial matters. In **module 2**, an overview of the current EU budget will be followed by details of the budget cycle, results, transparency and investment-related activities. **Module 3** takes a closer look at European Structural and Investments Funds and their implementation.

The European Fund for Strategic Investments and other European Investment Bank instruments are covered in **module 4**, including good practices and networking. EU programmes, procedures and agencies linked to regions and cities are presented in **module 5**. Finally, **module 6** will consider the mid-term review of the EU's 2014-2020 budget and post-2020 prospects. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/CoR-online-MOOC.aspx>

NEWS [IN BRIEF]

REGION OF EPIRUS WINS BEST PRACTICE AWARD FOR 'CITIZENS GUIDE'

A praiseworthy initiative from Greece has excelled in the 2015 competition for public sector projects organised by the European Institute of Public Administration. The aim of this competition is to highlight the most innovative and effective actions which serve as examples at both a European and International level. One of the poorest Greek regions, Epirus has successfully developed a 'Citizens Guide' as a useful online tool for serving citizens and businesses remotely and saving time and money. The project will help with the decongestion of the large volume of people waiting to be served and will result in greater productivity by

civil servants. It will also increase transparency and trust towards public services.

The project was among 64 identified as good practice submitted by 36 European countries and European institutions. It is worth noting that the Epirus 'Citizens Guide' was created exclusively by civil servants using free, open-source software, reducing the total cost of implementation, hosting and maintenance to zero! The idea originated from the regional vice-governor of Epirus, Ms Tatiana Kalogianni, whose support was crucial to the success of the entire project. ■

.....
FIND OUT MORE
<http://www.politis.gov.gr>



NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

The European Commission has appointed Marc Lemaître as Director-General of its DG for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). He took up his new role on 1 September, succeeding Walter Deffaa.

Mr Lemaître brings 20 years of profound experience in European affairs, both in the European Commission and in Luxembourg's diplomatic service. Between 1996 and 2006, he worked in the Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the European Union, dealing with budgetary, trade and general affairs issues, including the preparation and negotiation of the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2007-2013.

He joined the Commission in 2007 as head of the private office of Regional Policy Commissioner, Danuta Hübner, and then her successor, Paweł Samecki. Between 2010 and 2013, Mr Lemaître led the private office of Budget Commissioner Janusz Lewandowski, a period during which the present Multiannual Financial



^ Regional Vice-Governor of Epirus, Tatiana Kalogianni (centre) pictured at the award reception >

Framework (2014-2020) was prepared and agreed. Since 2013, he has managed the PMO (Paymaster Office), a department comprising nearly 600 staff. ■

NEW FEATURES ON THE OPEN DATA PORTAL

New data and features have been added to the European Structural and Investment Funds open data platform. Now users are able to view all 533 ESIF programmes 2014-2020 (accessible via the country pages), including financing and expected achievements based on common indicators (where available). The finances dataset has been updated to reflect adopted programmes as of July 2016, and cross-border cooperation programmes under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) have also been added. It is also possible now for users to visualise

the thematic breakdown of funding as either the total amount or as a percentage of the national allocation. ■

FIND OUT MORE

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion6/cp_data.png

SCORING WELL ON INNOVATION

The Commission has released the 2016 results of the European Innovation Scoreboard, the Regional Innovation Scoreboard and the Innobarometer. The main findings are that EU innovation is catching up with Japan and the US, once again Sweden is the innovation leader, and Latvia has become the fastest growing innovator.



Regional innovative hubs also exist in moderate innovator countries: Piemonte and Friuli-Venezia Giulia in Italy, País Vasco in Spain and Bratislavský kraj in Slovakia. Overall, the key driver of becoming an innovation leader is to adopt a **balanced innovation system** which combines an appropriate level of public and private investment, effective innovation partnerships among companies and with academia, as well as a strong educational basis and excellent research. Over the next two years, the EU's innovation performance is expected to improve. The majority of companies plan either to maintain or increase the level of investment in innovation over the next year. Businesses in Romania, Malta and Ireland are the most likely to increase their investment in innovation. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards/>

PROJECTS

YOUTH REGAIN ASSETS SEIZED FROM MAFIA

**EUROPEAN UNION:
EUR 227 900**

**REVOLVING FUND:
(NATIONAL CO-FINANCING)
EUR 107 500**

**REVOLVING FUND:
(COHESION ACTION PLAN)
EUR 194 700**

Premises seized from the Mafia in Balestrate, a coastal town with 6 000 inhabitants in Sicily's Palermo Province, will be used for a youth meeting centre.

The building was confiscated from a local Mafioso and transferred to Balestrate Municipality Property in 2009. It was renovated thanks to funding of EUR 530 000 under the national 'Operational Programme for Security', with a view to converting it into the first centre for young people in the town.

The Balestrate Municipality launched a tender for the administration of this centre in December 2015. The winning bid came from a joint venture of six local, non-profit organisations wanting to unite in a network for the greatest youth participation project in the history of Balestrate.

Creating a youth centre in a building that was confiscated from the Mafia, in a local area with significant Mafia presence, is of great symbolic significance. The Italian state administration is taking assets away from the Mafia and giving them back to civil society, especially young people.

As a result, activities aiming to promote and disseminate a culture of lawfulness will take place in the centre to help prevent young people from going astray by raising their awareness about lawfulness, equality, respect and democracy. This will be promoted through dissemination and testimonials to transfer the commitment of the many people who have lost their lives fighting the Mafia to the younger generation.

Cultural initiatives concerning lawfulness and combatting the Mafia, rackets and usury, will take place, along with the promotion of volunteer camps for young people interested in fighting the Mafia.

Culture on the agenda

Art, theatre and music workshops will be organised in the centre in an effort to put to good use the professional skills provided by the six organisations administering the project. Citizenship training courses, as well as study motivation and tutoring seminars, will be held to help to prevent students dropping out of school – the organisers are convinced that the fight against the Mafia starts with culture and education.

A 'Europe-Lab' (Laboratorio Europa) will be created to publicise the opportunities offered by EU programmes for youth, such as Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, Creative Europe and the Youth Guarantee scheme.

Thus, the centre will become both a physical and iconic venue – a site for developing and disseminating the culture of lawfulness in order to strengthen the feeling of security across the region and make it a better place to live. It will be a place to create and support project ideas for spreading citizen awareness and freedom of participation, especially for young people.

Finally, the centre will symbolise the EU's presence deep in southern Italy – a symbol of redemption and growth created thanks to the opportunities provided by the EU institutions. ■

PROJECTS

SME EXPERTISE IN SUSTAINABLE VEHICLE RESTORATION

**TOTAL INVESTMENT:
EUR 3 605 900**

**EU CONTRIBUTION:
EUR 1 000 000**



Mobiel Erfgoed Centrum project coordinator Hans Visser tells *Panorama* about helping local SMEs to create a viable industry in the restoration of used ships, aircraft, cars and trains.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often lack expertise in how best to apply their knowledge and commercialise their ideas. By providing the tools and resources to help owners and heritage organisations sustainably restore and preserve various modes of transport, the Mobiel Erfgoed Centrum (MEC) project has played a key role in enabling businesses to realise their commercial potential.

The project has developed a valorisation knowledge portal where SMEs can find help on testing their prototypes or forming partnerships. An open innovation environment has been established that brings together entrepreneurs, educational institutions and testing facilities, which should accelerate market introduction of new services and products.

Panorama: What 'spark' got this project off the ground?

Hans Visser: Addressing companies' needs really got this project going. Moreover, we saw a great opportunity to test prototypes on selected vehicles housed in participating museums. In this way, we were able to create a high-level but low-cost 'fab-lab' environment for SME innovation.

Who took the lead in the project?

Mobiel Erfgoed Centrum is an independent foundation supported by the business community, universities, other educational organisations (vocational training institutes) and the government. The MEC Foundation aims to capture and transfer the knowledge, expertise and skills needed to maintain, manage and operate mobile heritage objects and to transfer this to firms, individuals, educational institutions and youth in the Netherlands.

So how important was the involvement of SMEs?

The foundation worked directly with the SMEs, helping to ease the administrative burden and develop new innovative knowledge and techniques. The MEC project also brought together some top economic performers in the region, such as in the chemical, energy, maritime and transport sectors.

How was funding secured and managed?

Prior to the ERDF application, the coordinator received co-funding from the municipality of Rotterdam for the entire project period. This gave us assurance from the start of the project and a buffer to fund the start-up costs, in particular the costs of the secretariat. EU funding was then secured thanks to the enthusiastic participation of both businesses and vocational training institutions. It was managed through a cooperative foundation set up specifically to manage and assist SME involvement in European projects.

How were relations with the managing authority?

There was regular contact with 'Kansen voor West', especially on substantive and

financial project changes, and they always took the fastest possible processing and disbursement route. We also found their auditing was professional and committed, which helped us to better manage financial records. The financial report was a lot of work for the secretariat, but their input helped remove many of the administrative burdens on our SME partners.

How did the partnership evolve during the project?

The project enjoyed enthusiastic cooperation throughout from all partners, with over 100 people involved. Indeed, many decided to continue collaborating at project end to further develop the new technologies pioneered, such as solar cell technology, 3D printing, composite materials and ICT tools.

What were the main challenges encountered?

The first challenge was to stimulate new business opportunities in the restoration, electrical, iron/ steel and woodworking sectors. Then we had to find the right way to

use innovative multimedia techniques to capture the knowledge and skills required. Finally, we had to disseminate the required input for restoration, management and operation of mobile heritage objects.

Can you identify three or four milestone moments?

Making everything work at the administrative level was a real test, although it all fell into place once we had completed our progress report. We organised several conferences and participated in the Interclassic Fair where we disseminated our results. These events yielded new insights into how to transfer knowledge and skills, which is important in furthering the social innovation chain between SMEs and research/ education institutes.

Who are the main beneficiaries of MEC?

Obviously the participating SMEs, in terms of developing new innovative products and processes for restoring various modes of transport. In fact, 92 full-time positions have resulted from the project to date, and vocational training institutions have also benefitted. The portal will provide easy and direct access to key project findings, specifically for SMEs and vocational institutions involved in clean mobility and maintenance.

What sustainable results have come out of this project?

We hope the knowledge and skills gained and shared will contribute to a cleaner Rotterdam and the Province of Zuid-Holland. The MEC project will stimulate sustainable mobility through electrification and by con-



verting vehicles to run on solar energy, thereby improving air quality and reducing noise. We believe our accomplishments showcase possibilities for combining authentic craftsmanship with innovative techniques and clean mobility concepts.

How could the approach be replicated for similar projects?

The MEC Foundation is already involved in a new ERDF-funded project focusing on developing new and sustainable ways of reducing high levels of pollution from older vehicles through electrification and fuel cells.

What lessons have been learned for the future?

One important thing we have learned is that the basis for any project should be the needs of the companies involved. Only then is it possible to develop a sustainable business case for the innovative products, systems or processes to be developed. This was the starting point for our project, and we believe it should be for any project applying for EU funding. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://www.mobielerfgoedcentrum.nl/>





PROJECTS

GREEK HEALTH SYSTEM GOES DIGITAL

**TOTAL INVESTMENT:
EUR 13 937 100**

**EU CONTRIBUTION:
EUR 13 937 100**

The e-Prescription project is modernising the Greek health system by replacing the existing practice of handwriting prescriptions with a digitalised operating platform.

Completed at the end of 2015, the e-Prescription project is currently one of the most important e-government applications in operation across the country. With funding from the European Regional Development Fund, more specifically from the Operational Programme ‘Digital Convergence’, the e-health application has been installed and is managed by IDIKA SA, an e-government centre for social security services. Focusing on improving patient safety and quality of care and better use of resources, the system aims to provide an open modular e-Prescription environment which is EU compatible and interoperable with other national e-health applications and third-party information systems.

The digital social service connects and operates across all of the country’s national social insurance funds through a fully integrated e-Prescription platform. In this way, the project is contributing to transparency and supporting decision-making by providing accurate statistical data. In addition, its objectives are closely aligned with the Greek health policy (2014-2020) which prioritises primary healthcare, pooling financial resources, introducing new managerial and administrative methods, adopting cost-effective monitoring mechanisms, and developing policies for the better allocation of resources.

Fit for purpose

The main operation covers the prescription of drugs and laboratory test referrals, from monitoring requests through to the payment of beneficiaries. The e-prescriptions generated by the

prescribing doctor are stored in the national database from where they can be accessed by pharmacies and diagnostic centres for execution. Information in the database is made available through secure access to health insurance organisations, the ministry of health, and supervising authorities, among others. Similarly, all transactions via the national social insurance funds are monitored and managed from start to end, including doctors’ visits and electronic medical act referrals.

On the patient’s side, an electronic prescription replaces the often illegible handwritten order, making it easier to renew prescriptions while, at the same time, minimising risks of misreading the doctor’s instructions. The figures available for 2015 show that 3 million patients approximately benefited from the new prescription service each month.

Similarly, e-Prescription helps to reduce the complexities of prescription insurance cover by simplifying the entire procedure and ensuring patients’ records are kept up to date.

Furthermore, the new digital service gives doctors a clear overview of their patients’ medical history as well as providing better alignment with medical guidelines and pharmaceutical practice. The very positive response to the e-Prescription system can be seen in the statistics gathered which show that although only recently introduced, it already covers more than 98% of all prescriptions prescribed today across the country.

Last but not least, within the context of the project, an e-Health suite is also being implemented, comprising a wide range of tools and services and has upgraded the already successful e-Prescription system at the national level. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://www.e-prescription.gr>

PROJECTS

BALANCING AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE BALTIC

**TOTAL INVESTMENT:
EUR 6 603 200**

**EU INVESTMENT:
EUR 4 351 700**

The Baltic COMPASS project brought together regional stakeholders from the agriculture and environment sectors to combat nutrient over-enrichment (also known as eutrophication) of the Baltic Sea and its catchment area.

The project's key stakeholders included government authorities, specialist institutes, farmers' organisations and companies. Together, they were able to introduce more efficient agro-environmental policies, share innovation and best practices, create scientific scenarios and invest in environmental technologies to deal with the problem of over enrichment.

The project has also helped to remedy gaps in the various stakeholders' management capacity and, most importantly, has succeeded in building mutual trust between the environmental and agricultural sectors.

Baltic COMPASS involved 22 partners from eight countries bordering the Baltic Sea and also Belarus. The project created at least five new staff positions, some permanent, thanks to funding from the EU's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under its Operational Programme 'Baltic Sea Region', during the 2007- 2013 programming period.

Win-win solution

"Baltic COMPASS helped the agricultural sector in the Baltic Sea Region find ways to produce the daily food required by the region's 90 million inhabitants, while preserving the Baltic Sea. If the measures recommended under the project are successfully implemented across the region, they will make a real difference to the Baltic Sea," said Ola Palm from

the Swedish Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Engineering (JTI).

In the longer term, the results expected from this initiative include new strategies to reduce eutrophication, stronger links between agricultural and environmental interests and more cost-efficient policy actions.

It is also hoped that countries from the east and west of the region will become more integrated in line with the EU's Strategy for the Baltic Sea. Moreover, by combining and disseminating their unique knowledge and experiences, the stakeholders have paved the way for improved agro-environmental awareness across the region. This will result in win-win solutions for agriculture and the environment without weakening the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.

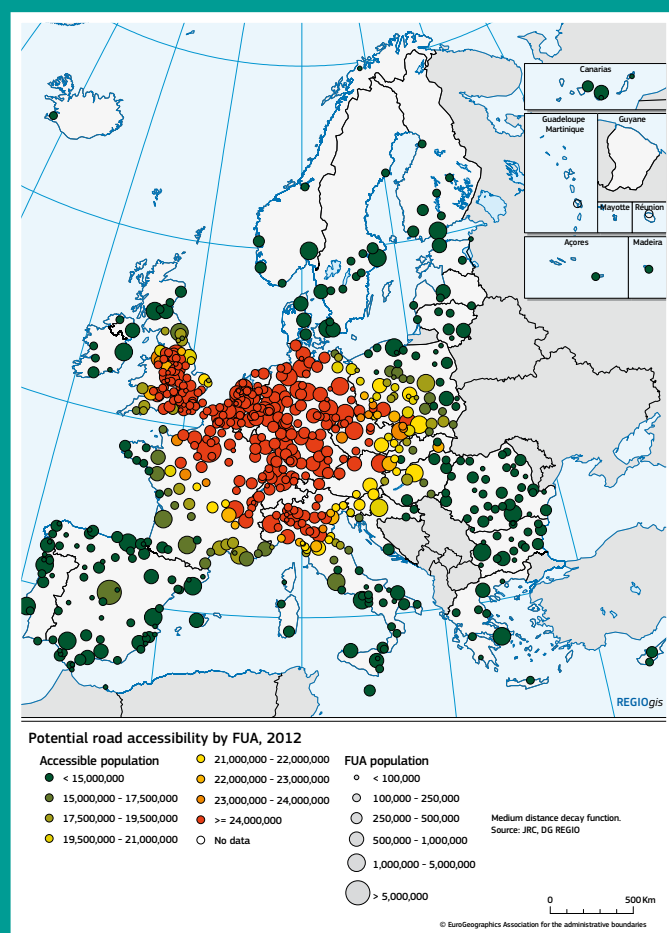
The project worked closely with two other agri-environmental projects: Baltic Deal and Baltic Manure. The most visible outcome of this collaboration is the 'Greener Agriculture for a Bluer Baltic Sea' stakeholder conference which has been held since 2010 and has grown into the most important event for agri-environmental stakeholders in the region. ■

FIND OUT MORE

<http://www.balticcompass.org/>

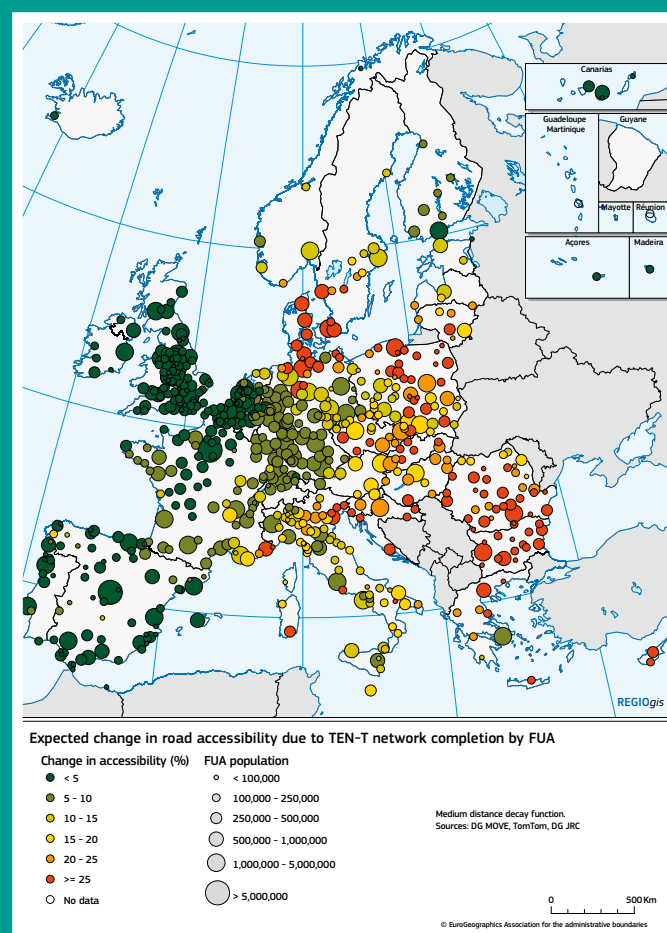
POTENTIAL ROAD ACCESSIBILITY BY FUNCTIONAL URBAN AREA, 2012

This map shows the current level of accessibility by road from all municipalities in the major functional urban areas to all municipalities in the EU and the EFTA countries. The analysis takes into account speed and traffic conditions observed on the entire major road network, including bridges and ferries. Accessibility is expressed as the number of inhabitants who can be reached, taking into account the travel time required to get to the destination. Accessibility is highest in the cities in the heart of Europe, but some of the larger more peripheral cities, such as Warsaw or Budapest, also have high accessibility scores.



EXPECTED CHANGE IN ROAD ACCESSIBILITY DUE TO TEN-T NETWORK COMPLETION BY FUNCTIONAL URBAN AREA

The map shows the expected change in the accessibility levels of functional urban areas due to the completion of the Trans-European Transport Network. TEN-T policy, supported by Cohesion Policy instruments, invests in the construction of new roads and upgrading existing ones. Many functional urban areas are expected to benefit from important accessibility gains (often over +20%) thanks to TEN-T projects. The expected increases are particularly high in cities in Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia.



Source: JRC (based on data from TomTom, EuroGeographics, Eurostat, DG REGIO and DG MOVE TENtec)

LEGAL NOTICE

Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use to which information contained in this publication may be put, nor for any errors which may appear despite careful preparation and checking.

This publication does not necessarily reflect the view or the position of the European Commission.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2016

ISSN 1725-8308

© European Union, 2016

Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged. (*) The rights for the images in question is granted only for use in the magazine Panorama (issue 58) and not for other uses; within the context of Panorama 58 and its language versions the image may be reproduced – the image may not be reproduced for other purposes.

For use/reproduction of third-party copyright material specified as such permission must be obtained from the copyright holder(s).

Printed in Belgium

This magazine is printed in English, French, German, Bulgarian, Greek, Spanish, Italian, Polish and Romanian on recycled paper. It is available online in 22 languages at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/panorama-magazine/

The content of this issue was finalised in August 2016.

PHOTOGRAPHS (PAGES):

Cover: © iStock, albertogardin

Page 4: © iStock, Kaycco

Page 7: © iStock, standret

Page 8: © Martijn Beekman

Page 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 28, 29, 30, 36, 43:

© European Commission

Page 14: © iStock, RicoK69

Page 16, 17: © RWMC Ljubljana

Page 20: © iStock, knape, © Council of Oulu region

Page 21: © iStock, Alvaro Arroyo, © Cohesion and

Development Agency

Page 23: © iStock, Delpixart, © Antoine Darnaud -

Région Languedoc Roussillon Midi Pyrénées

Page 24: © iStock, Borisb17

Page 25: © County of Stockholm

Page 26, 27: © Črt Slavec - Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, Slovenia

Page 31: © Diriti a Scuola

Page 32: © Living Lab

Page 30, 33: © Thinkstock, fotoember

Page 35: © Apulia Region Administration

Page 37: © Thinkstock, Creatas Images

Page 39: © Ministry of Economic Development, Poland, © Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, Slovenia, © FEDER Luxembourg, © Lisboa 2020

Page 40: © Marjorie Jouen

Page 41: © iStock, RoBeDeRo

Page 42: © Committee of the Regions

Page 45: © Balestrate Municipality

Page 46, 47: © Mobiel Erfgoed Centrum

Page 48: © e-prescription

Page 49: © Baltic COMPASS

AGENDA

10-13 OCTOBER

Brussels (BE)

European Week of Regions and Cities
(incl. RegioStars ceremony)

3-4 NOVEMBER

Bratislava (SK)

5th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy
for the Danube Region

8-9 NOVEMBER

Stockholm (SE)

7th Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy
for the Baltic Sea Region

30-31 MARCH 2017

Brussels (BE)

Forum of the Outermost Regions

26-27 JUNE 2017

Brussels (BE)

Cohesion Forum

STAY CONNECTED



ec.europa.eu/regional_policy
cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu



@EU_Regional
#CohesionPolicy | #ESIFunds



EUinmyRegion



flickr.com/euregional



RegioNetwork



yammer.com/RegioNetwork



[ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/
cretu_en](http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/cretu_en)
@CorinaCretuEU

More information on these events can be found in the Agenda section of the Inforegio website:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/events/



Publications Office

European Commission,
Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
Communication – Ana-Paula Laissy
Avenue de Beaulieu 1 – B-1160 Brussels
E-mail: regio-panorama@ec.europa.eu