



Synergies between Horizon Europe and the European Regional Development Fund programmes

'Seal of Excellence' Community of Practice meeting
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Horizon Europe and Cohesion Policy: Working for Innovation

Pillar 1 Excellent Science

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie
Actions

Research Infrastructures

Pillar 2 Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

- Clusters
- Health
 - Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society
 - Civil Security for Society
 - Digital, Industry and Space
 - Climate, Energy and Mobility
 - Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Joint Research Centre

Pillar 3 Innovative Europe

European Innovation Council

European innovation
ecosystems

European Institute of Innovation
and Technology

Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

Widening participation and spreading excellence

Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

Policy Objective 1

A more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity

Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisations and public authorities

Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, incl. by productive investments

Developing skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship

Enhancing digital connectivity

Synergies – what and why?

Synergies involve two or more programmes interacting to produce a greater effect than individual interventions.

For the first time, the 2014-2020 legal frameworks of Horizon 2020 and the European Structural and Investment Funds included a specific request to establish synergies between the two programmes.

In 2014-2022 implementation limited to Seal of Excellence and Teaming

Difficulties in implementation (ex.state aid) and lessons learnt

Synergies – what and why?

Imperative to further extend the synergies

Reflected in the recitals in the Regulations for 2021-2027

CPR: The synergies between the Funds and directly managed instruments should be optimised. The provision of support for operations that have already received a Seal of Excellence or were co-funded by Horizon Europe with a contribution from the Funds should be facilitated. Conditions already assessed at Union level, prior to the attributing of the Seal of Excellence quality label or the co-funding by Horizon Europe, should not be assessed again, as long as the operations comply with a limited set of requirements established in this Regulation. This should also facilitate following the appropriate rules set out in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 (20).

Horizon: Annex IV of Horizon Europe Regulation

Shared management side: ERDF /ESF

Direct management side: Horizon Europe, DEP, CEF, Single Market Programme etc...



Synergies between Horizon Europe and Cohesion Policy programmes – Preconditions

- Alignment of strategies
 - ✓ Horizon Europe strategic planning and Work Programmes
 - ✓ ERDF/ESF+ programmes
- Alignment of legal provisions
 - ✓ Horizon Europe/Annex IV
 - ✓ Common Provision Regulation ('CPR')
 - ✓ EU State aid rules – the General Block Exemption Regulation ('GBER')
- Joint support initiatives
 - Seal of Excellence Community of Practice (regular meetings & IT platform)
 - COMMISSION NOTICE - GUIDANCE ON SYNERGIES (C(2022) 4747 final of 5/7/22)
 - Upcoming joint network research & cohesion community

State aid – synergy provisions

GBER amendment of 23 July 2021

New articles

Article 25a Aid for projects awarded a Seal of Excellence quality label

Article 25b Aid for Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions and ERC Proof of Concept actions

Article 25c Aid involved in co-funded research and development projects

Article 25d Aid for Teaming actions

Synergies – support for ‘Seal-of-Excellence’



Seal of Excellence

Pipeline of excellent R&I projects identified for funding

Leverage of Horizon Europe mechanisms and visibility + economic impact at regional level

- ‘Seal of Excellence’ for ‘excellent’ Horizon Europe proposals – not funded due to insufficient budget. Possible alternative funding, e.g. from ERDF, ESF+ or EAFRD – up to the national/regional managing authority’s choice
- Projects may receive directly - **without a new qualitative evaluation** – ERDF/ESF+ funding under CPR rules (only check of specific eligibility criteria, contribution to programme objectives, smart specialisation priorities, scope of the fund – i.e. issues not guaranteed by the Seal)
- Managing Authorities may apply to these operations the **Horizon Europe categories, maximum amounts and methods of calculation of eligible costs**
- **‘Synergies-friendly’ State aid rules:** specific conditions facilitate the granting of aid for ‘Seal-of-Excellence’ projects of SMEs (→ Art. 25a and 25b amended General Block Exemption Regulation)

SoE

SoE - most common components of Horizon concerned
(EIC Accelerator, EIC Transition, EIC Proof of Concept, Marie Curie Actions, Teaming)

Practical steps:

Preparation/programming

Awarding of SoE

Allocation of support

Implementation

Synergies – cumulative funding



Cumulative funding

Allows pooling funding from two different instruments in one project

- An action that has received a contribution from another Union programme may also receive a contribution under the Programme, provided that the contributions do not cover the same costs. The rules of the relevant Union programme shall apply to the corresponding contribution to the action.
- Cumulative funding makes it possible to spread the financial burden of an operation and to address possible budgetary constraints (e.g. those stemming from an instrument's lower funding rates) because it can allow up to 100% of a synergy project to be funded from the EU's budget, provided relevant State aid rules are complied with.
- It also makes it possible to support national contributions, particularly in less developed Member States and regions.

Cumulative funding

Preparation/ programming

Allocation of support

Parallel calls

Two grant agreements

Two set of rules

Implementation

Issue of double funding/ double declaration

'Synergies' – in European Partnerships



Support to Partnerships

ERDF as MS contribution in
Horizon Europe partnerships

major incentive for
participation of regional
actors + alignment towards
common EU priorities

- ✓ 'European Partnership' – Union with private and/or public partners jointly support the development and implementation of an R&I-programme:
 - ✓ 'Co-funded European Partnership': Union provides co-funding to an R&I-programme implemented by national entities
 - ✓ 'Institutionalised European Partnership' (Art. 185/187 TFEU): Union provides co-funding to a joint programme implemented by structures created for that purpose
- ✓ ERDF may be considered as Member State contribution to European Partnerships, provided that the relevant CPR-provisions and fund-specific regulations are complied with.
- ✓ Bodies implementing the partnership must be designated as ERDF intermediate bodies (CPR)
- ✓ MAs may decide to provide support directly to operations selected under the partnership (CPR)
- ✓ **NB: !! specific administrative steps allow to comply with the requirement of avoiding DOUBLE declaration of costs - Check the 'synergy guidance' (cumulative funding)!**

Synergies – support for Horizon ‘Teaming’ actions

- ‘Teaming’ supports Centres of Excellence in eligible countries (‘Widening’) in partnership with an “advanced” partner from another Member State.
- Beneficiaries are mostly universities and research organisations, sometimes also regional authorities and SMEs
- Two separate projects ‘integrated’ under the same chapeau. Single evaluation of both parts (HE and complementary funding) under HE
- Possibility to apply HE rules on eligible costs and funding rates, no need for another technical evaluation (similar as Seal of Excellence)
- ‘Synergies-friendly’ State aid rules: specific conditions facilitate the granting of aid to co-finance a Teaming action together with the EU, and investment aid for related infrastructure, e.g. research infrastructure
(→ Art. 25d amended General Block Exemption Regulation)

Synergies – transfer to Horizon Europe



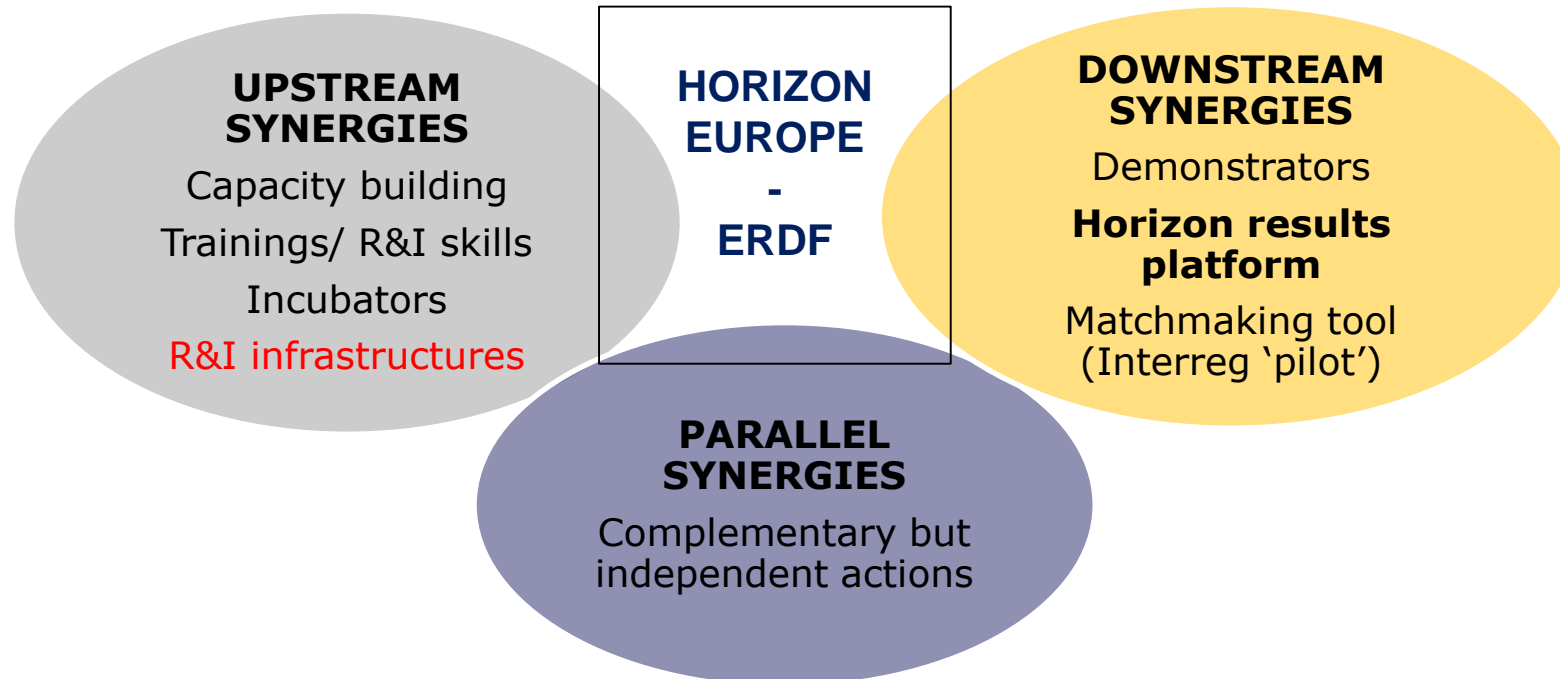
Transfer possibility

Strengthen participation in
HE for low success rate MS

Preserves administrative
capacity at national/regional
level

- Member State may request a **voluntary** transfer of up to 5 % of their national allocation (e.g. ERDF) to Horizon Europe
- Transfer may only concern **future budgetary commitments**. ERDF programme has to be amended, incl. its financing plan
- Investments for the benefit of the transferring Member State/region.
- Commission may object to a transfer request if achievement of ERDF programme's objectives would be undermined
- **Rules of the receiving EU Fund/instrument apply** to the transferred amounts
- **Transfer-back:** Where the Commission has not entered into a legal commitment under Horizon Europe by 31 August of n+1, the corresponding uncommitted resources may be transferred back to the respective programmes covered by the CPR.

Synergies: Wide range of opportunities





Dissemination and Exploitation tools R&I programmes and beyond

Identifying EU funded results and boosting them onto the path to the market deployment:

[Horizon Results Platform](#) – EU funded results register!

[Horizon Results Booster](#) – support for beneficiaries!

EU mission portfolios – multi-programme clustering of projects and results!

[H2020- Interreg Synergies Mapping Tool](#) – interoperation of EU programmes and matching on potential synergies!

Further steps

Implementation of synergies based on Notice on synergies between Horizon Europe and ERDF programmes

Acting upon recommendations from ECA audit

More cooperation between the communities: Upcoming ERA subgroup on Access to excellence (joint network of MS research & cohesion representatives)

Include NCP in Monitoring Committees

USEFUL LINKS

- Synergy guidance document: https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/synergies-between-horizon-europe-and-erdf-programmes-draft-commission-notice_en
- European Innovation Agenda: https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/support-policy-making/shaping-eu-research-and-innovation-policy/new-european-innovation-agenda_en#documents
- DG RTD: https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/synergies-guidance-out-2022-jul-06_en
- DG REGIO: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/communications/2022/synergies-between-erdf-programmes-and-horizon-europe