



Plenary sitting

**B8-0851/2016 }
B8-0852/2016 }
B8-0857/2016 }
B8-0858/2016 }
B8-0860/2016 } RC1**

4.7.2016

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 123(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the motions by the following groups:

Verts/ALE (B8-0851/2016)

ECR (B8-0852/2016)

EFDD (B8-0857/2016)

ALDE (B8-0858/2016)

PPE, S&D (B8-0860/2016)

on synergies for innovation: the European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other European innovation funds and EU programmes (2016/2695(RSP))

Christian Ehler, Lambert van Nistelrooij

on behalf of the PPE Group

Constanze Krehl, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Derek Vaughan

on behalf of the S&D Group

Evžen Tošenovský, Ruža Tomašić, Remo Sernagiotto, Raffaele Fitto,

Angel Dzhambazki

on behalf of the ECR Group

Matthijs van Miltenburg, Lieve Wierinck, Iskra Mihaylova, Ivan

Jakovčić, Fredrick Federley

on behalf of the ALDE Group

Bronis Ropè, Davor Škrlec, Ernest Maragall

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Rosa D'Amato, David Borrelli, Isabella Adinolfi, Marco Zullo, Rolandas Paksas

on behalf of the EFDD Group

Barbara Kappel

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European Parliament resolution on synergies for innovation: the European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other European innovation funds and EU programmes (2016/2695(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Articles 4, 162 and 174 to 190 thereof,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (hereinafter ‘the Common Provisions Regulation’)¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006²,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006³,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal⁴,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1302/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 on a European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) as regards the clarification, simplification and improvement of the establishment and functioning of such groupings⁵,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1300/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the Cohesion Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1084/2006⁶,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320.

² OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 289.

³ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 470.

⁴ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 259.

⁵ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 303.

⁶ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 281.

Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005¹,

- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1982/2006/EC²,
- having regard to the report of its Committee on Regional Development Cohesion Policy and Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) (A8-0159/2016),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 1 June 2016 to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘Europe investing again – Taking stock of the Investment Plan for Europe and next steps’ (COM(2016)0359),
- having regard to the Commission publication of 22 February 2016 entitled ‘Investment Plan for Europe: new guidelines on combining European Structural and Investment Funds with the European Fund for Strategic Investments’,
- having regard to its resolution of 5 February 2013 on improving access to finance for SMEs³,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 January 2014 on smart specialisation: networking excellence for a sound Cohesion Policy⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 26 February 2014 on optimising the potential of outermost regions by creating synergies between the Structural Funds and other European Union programmes⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2015 on ‘Investment for jobs and growth: promoting economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Union’⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 26 November 2015 on ‘Towards simplification and performance orientation in cohesion policy 2014-2020’⁷,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 10 June 2014 entitled ‘Research and innovation as sources of renewed growth’ (COM(2014)0339),
- having regard to the Commission’s sixth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion entitled ‘Investment for jobs and growth’ of 23 July 2014,

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 487.

² OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 104.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0036.

⁴ Texts adopted, P7_TA (2014)0002.

⁵ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0133.

⁶ Texts adopted, P8_TA (2015)0308.

⁷ Texts adopted , P8_TA (2015)0419.

- having regard to the Commission communication of 26 November 2014 entitled ‘An Investment Plan for Europe’ (COM(2014)0903),
 - having regard to the Commission staff working document of 2014 entitled ‘Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes’ (SWD(2014)0205),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 6 October 2010 entitled ‘Regional Policy contributing to smart growth in Europe 2020’ (COM(2010)0553),
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 30 July 2013 entitled ‘Closing the Innovation Divide’,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 20 November 2014 entitled ‘Measures to support the creation of high-tech start-up ecosystems’,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas cohesion policy in the 2014-2020 financial programming period continues to represent the main EU instrument aimed at bringing the EU closer to its citizens, covering all regions, for investment in the real economy, and at the same time represents an expression of European solidarity by extending growth and prosperity and reducing economic, social and territorial disparities, which were exacerbated by the economic and financial crisis;
- B. whereas cohesion policy should be fully aligned with the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and is built around the articulation of its three funds, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF), together with a broader coordination under a Common Strategic Framework (CSF) with the funds for rural development, namely the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and, for the maritime and fisheries sector, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF);
- C. whereas common provisions were established for all five of these funds – the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) – under the Common Provisions Regulation, while specific rules applicable to each ESI Fund and to the European territorial cooperation goal were subject to separate regulations;
- D. whereas the recent cohesion policy reform introduced a limited number of objectives and priorities, creating a thematic focus / thematic concentration, while at the same time allowing a certain degree of flexibility and adaptation to certain characteristics; whereas, moreover, it ensured an enhanced partnership principle and solid multi-level governance, a well-defined approach for territorial development, increased synergies between the five funds, but also with other relevant programmes and initiatives (e.g. Horizon 2020, PSCI, COSME, LIFE, the Connecting Europe Facility, Erasmus+ and NER 300), further simplification of the implementation rules, an effective monitoring and evaluation system, a transparent performance framework, clear rules on the use of financial instruments, a sound management and control system and an effective financial management system;

- E. whereas on 14 December 2015 the Commission adopted a communication on the contribution of the ESI Funds to the EU's growth strategy, the Investment Plan and the Commission's priorities over the next decade, which is in fact the report, provided for in Article 16 of the Common Provisions Regulation on the ESI Funds, on their implementation so far, which also includes the outcomes of the negotiations with all the Member States on partnership agreements, operational programmes and the key challenges for each country;
- F. whereas the rationale of strengthening synergies between Horizon 2020 and ESI Funds lies in building meaningful interactions between investment strategies and interventions as a way to have significant impacts on the economy, combining innovation investments in smart specialisation priorities with world-class research and innovation initiatives, thus ensuring a higher impact of the funds;
1. Restates that links between cohesion policy and other EU policies, funding programmes and initiatives (e.g. Horizon 2020, the Connecting Europe Facility, the digital single market, rural development, the energy union, the innovation union and the Europe 2020 flagship initiatives) have been strengthened within the Common Strategic Framework introduced by the Common Provisions Regulation, and thus, through all its instruments and objectives, including the urban agenda, the territorial agenda, investment in SMEs, smart growth and smart specialisation strategies, and the potential public investments for the uptake of innovative solutions for, among other things, the environment, energy, health, climate, digitisation and transport, it is contributing substantially to strengthening the single market and achieving Europe 2020 strategy targets;
 2. Underlines the fact that the aforementioned synergies are built in right from the strategic planning stage, and therefore require, from the start, strategic choices and planning by the regions and Member States in order to identify and generate opportunities, for example for fostering excellence in the smart specialisation areas; points out that, in the case of Horizon 2020, this consists in raising awareness, providing information (in particular on research results from FP7 and Horizon 2020 projects), engaging in communication campaigns, opening up existing networks for newcomers and connecting National Contact Points (NCP) as much as possible to national and regional ESIF policy-makers and managing authorities;
 3. Stresses that the development of smart specialisation strategies through the involvement of national or regional managing authorities and stakeholders such as universities and other higher education institutions, industry and the social partners in an entrepreneurial discovery process is obligatory for the regions and Member States that wish to invest European Regional Development Fund resources in research and innovation; recalls that, given that smart specialisation strategies should include upstream actions (capacity building and improving national/regional R&I systems) and downstream actions (take-up of research results, innovation support and market access) in Horizon 2020, which in turn stimulates cooperation at EU level for closing the innovation divide in Europe and strengthening the Union's global competitiveness, while investing also in connections between front-runners and followers in the context of the Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation activities, the smart specialisation methodology should remain a

model for cohesion policy post-2020;

4. Believes that result-orientation in cohesion policy should be further strengthened; underlines the urgent need to increase synergies with other EU policies on competitiveness, in particular in the field of research and development, ICT, renewable energies and SMEs, with a view to increasing the exploitation rate of EU R&D results, creating new high-quality jobs and maintaining existing ones and promoting the green economy;
5. Notes that, in the 2014-2020 programming period, cohesion policy allows financial instruments to play an important complementary role, and recalls that financial instruments, as they are complementary to grants, have a leverage effect, which can increase the impact of financing for updating innovation in the market, for example through energy efficiency, and can contribute to a better absorption rate by providing the co-financing needed, in particular in Member States and regions with low national co-financing capacity; underlines, however, the fact that grants remain indispensable for certain projects such as R&I projects and those with a strong focus on societal challenges; recalls that grants and financial instruments do not finance the same types of activities and that those different forms of support target different types of beneficiaries and projects; stresses the importance of continuing with grant funding in future EU programmes; underlines the fact that the right balance between grants and financial instruments must be maintained in the future; recalls the need to further strengthen the accountability, transparency and result-orientation of financial instruments;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to pay constant attention to the needs of SMEs in the design and implementation of the ESI Funds and Horizon 2020, as well as to synergies between these; asks the Commission to prepare coordinated calls for proposals in order to ease access to multi-fund financing; calls also for a thorough evaluation of the relevant SME programmes such as COSME, the SME instrument of Horizon 2020 and the SME component in the EFSI, with regard to both budgetary allocation and project success rate, as well as to the administrative burden and ease of implementation;
7. Notes that synergies with other policies and instruments must be further enhanced in order to maximise the impact of investments; recalls, in this context, the Stairway to Excellence (S2E) EU budget pilot project, which continues to support regions of 13 Member States in developing and exploiting the synergies between the ESI Funds; calls for flexibility for Member States to use the Seal of Excellence; highlights, furthermore, the importance of also identifying related areas of specialisation in other regions and Member States with a view to teaming up with them and being better prepared for multi-country project opportunities and becoming internationally connected;
8. Recalls that, owing to budget constraints regarding Horizon 2020, there is a risk that projects evaluated as being excellent do not receive funding; stresses that alternative funding must be unlocked; ESIF grants, for example, could be awarded to excellent Horizon 2020 projects with the help of the Seal of Excellence;
9. Notes that the implementation of substantial parts of the Horizon 2020 budget will be delegated to public-public partnerships and public-private partnerships, which will offer opportunities to use the governance mechanisms of the public-public partnerships to

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optimise synergies with smart specialisation initiatives (RIS3) and programmes by shaping the annual work plans;

10. Underlines that the EFSI must be complementary and additional to the ESI Funds and other EU programmes such as Horizon 2020 and to the regular activities of the European Investment Bank; notes that, as a result, the EFSI targets different kinds of projects from those that the EUR 2.2 billion would have targeted through Horizon 2020; stresses that full coherence and synergies between all EU instruments should be ensured, in order to achieve the overarching strategic goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to avoid overlaps or contradictions among them or between the different levels of policy implementation, while complementing national and regional funds and programmes; recalls that the review of the Europe 2020 strategy must determine which means are needed, while using all available resources effectively and achieving the expected results in terms of the overarching strategic goals, given that the quantity, quality and impact of R&I investments should be increased through the coordinated use of cohesion policy instruments and Horizon 2020;
11. Calls on the Commission to monitor synergies between the funds systematically and to issue a communication on these synergies, in particular on the synergies between Horizon 2020 and RIS3, with a view to spreading examples of best practice and increasing their impact ahead of the review of the Europe 2020 strategy; recalls that any such system should not result in an increased administrative burden;
12. Highlights the preparations by the Commission for the possible establishment of a European Innovation Council for better coordination of innovation initiatives in the European Union; notes that the main objective of a European Innovation Council (EIC) should be to help reduce barriers to commercialisation in Europe and close the innovation divide; stresses that an EIC should involve all relevant stakeholders and have transparent, swift consultations and decision-making processes, avoiding overlap; underlines, furthermore, that the Horizon 2020 budget should be fully restored to the pre-EFSI level;
13. Underlines the link between Horizon 2020 and the ESI Funds in terms of security (the need to have the same level of ICT infrastructure across the EU); favours a harmonisation of ICT security structures; calls, furthermore, for a link between these funds in terms of auditing processes, and calls on the Commission to establish a clear, aligned and coordinated approach for the post-2020 period, with a special focus on administrative and auditing processes, proportionality and accountability;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the national and regional governments of the Member States.