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REPORT

on smart specialisation: networking excellence for a sound Cohesion Policy
(2013/2094(INI))

Committee on Regional Development

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on smart specialisation: networking excellence for a sound Cohesion Policy (2013/2094(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Titles XVII, XVIII and XIX thereof,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999¹,
- having regard to Council Decision 2006/702/EC of 6 October 2006 on Community strategic guidelines on cohesion²,
- having regard to its resolution of 5 July 2011 on the Commission's fifth Cohesion Report and the strategy for post-2013 cohesion policy³,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 June 2011 on the state of play and future synergies for increased effectiveness between the ERDF and other structural funds⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 7 October 2010 on EU cohesion and regional policy after 2013⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on the contribution of the cohesion policy to the achievement of Lisbon and the EU 2020 Objectives⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on the implementation of the synergies of research and innovation earmarked Funds in Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 concerning the European Regional Development Fund and the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development in cities and regions as well as in the Member States and the Union⁷,
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 6 October 2011 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council 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 covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the

¹ OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 25.

² OJ L 291, 21.10.2006, p. 11.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0316.

⁴ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0286.

⁵ OJ C 371 E, 20.12.2011, p. 39.

⁶ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0191.

⁷ OJ C 161 E, 31.05.11, p. 104.

European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (COM(2011)0615),

- having regard to the Commission proposal of 6 October 2011 for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on specific provisions concerning the European Regional Development Fund and the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 (COM(2011)0614),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 6 October 2010 entitled ‘Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative: Innovation Union’ (COM(2010)0546),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 9 November 2010 entitled ‘Conclusions of the fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion: the future of cohesion policy’ (COM(2010)0642),
- 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 Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Commission’s March 2012 ‘Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3)’,
- having regard to the OECD’s December 2012 ‘Report on innovation driven-growth in regions: the role of smart specialisation’,
- having regard to its study of December 2012 entitled ‘Ex-ante conditionalities in cohesion policy’, commissioned by the Directorate-General for Internal Policies,
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 21 March 2013 entitled ‘State of the Innovation Union 2012 – Accelerating change’ (COM(2013)0149),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 13 September 2013 entitled ‘Measuring innovation output in Europe: towards a new indicator’ (COM(2013)0624),
- having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0462/2013),

- A. whereas, especially during these times of economic, financial and social crisis, the EU must step up its efforts to complete the innovation union and create sustainable economic growth, and whereas, because of the tight budget situation in many Member States and regions as well as at EU level, resources available are limited, and particularly efficient use has therefore to be made of them,
- B. whereas “Smart specialisation strategy” means the national or regional innovation strategies which set priorities in order to build competitive advantage by developing and

matching research and innovation (R&I) own strengths with business needs to address emerging opportunities and market developments in a coherent manner, while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts, and which may take the form of, or be included in a national or a regional R&I strategic policy framework¹.

- C. whereas supporting research, development and innovation (R&D&I) is one of the Cohesion Policy objectives that is subject to obligatory thematic concentration under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for 2014-2020;
- D. whereas for the 2014-2020 programme planning period Member States are required, for the first time, to design an R&I strategy to boost regional innovative capacity and to coordinate R&D&I spending more effectively² ;
- E. whereas, in the process, regions should focus on a small number of priority areas that take account of their respective strengths and weaknesses, and should drive innovation to promote and renew regional economies in a sustainable manner;
- F. whereas regions should formulate a smart specialisation strategy *through* a process of critical self-analysis, in close cooperation with *civil society and* with *stakeholders* that include research centres, universities and other higher-education establishments, and businesses³;
- G. whereas the purpose of the strategy is to maximise synergies from all instruments and investment in the R&D&I area – and to boost, in particular, synergies between Horizon 2020 and the Structural Funds – in order to close the innovation gap between regions;
- H. whereas regions should also draw up investment plans for the use of all available regional, national and EU funding for R&D&I, indicating as well how to stimulate private investment and how it should be used in the implementation of the Union's R&D&I priorities in the coming years;
- I. whereas summaries of such strategies, or at least plans for their implementation, should be included in partnership agreements and operational programmes;
- J. whereas the Commission may withhold interim payments of ERDF funding for the thematic objective of strengthening R&D&I if these pre-conditions are not met;
- K. whereas, given the multi-level governance nature of regional policy, regions should be allowed the flexibility of identifying the modalities for fulfilling the ex-ante conditionalities;
- L. whereas the regions should not only become more closely integrated internally, but must

¹ Article 2, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

² Annex V, Table 1, Ex ante conditionalities, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

³ See definition of 'smart specialisation strategy', Article 2(2)(2b) (new), Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482.

also cooperate more closely with each other, in order to become more competitive globally;

General remarks

1. Acknowledges that a smart specialisation strategy is a dynamic, long-term process, the participants in which are on a constant learning curve, and that this process should also continue over the next programme planning period and beyond;
2. Considers that, aside from the need to fulfil the ex-ante-conditionality, developing such a strategy can offer regions significant medium-term and long-term advantages in terms of the effectiveness of their R&D&I, as it entails a coordinated approach and a close look at their potential for innovation;
3. Calls on each region to view such a strategy not only as a statutory obligation but also as a source of opportunity; calls, therefore, on all regions and Member States, in so far as they have not yet done so, to press ahead with formulating their smart specialisation strategies, so as not to risk delays in receiving EU funding for the relevant operational programmes owing to the lack of such a strategy;
4. Recognises the need for information in the regions, and therefore emphasises the importance of the advice and support provided by DG REGIO, DG RTD and other relevant directorates-general, as well as by the platform in Seville¹, and calls on them to step up their activities further; calls on all regions to make greater use of the platform; advocates developing broad-based local campaigns to disseminate information on the smart specialisation strategy in order for stakeholders and civil society to be able to participate;
5. Calls on the Commission to support the regions in establishing the foreseen monitoring system in an effective way, using meaningful indicators, and thereby, in particular, to provide data on which EU-wide and international comparisons can be based;

The ‘right’ priorities

6. Underscores the fact that the regions differ significantly in their levels of development and have very different strengths and weaknesses; calls, therefore, on the regions to make their own appropriate choice of actions by focusing on strengthening their regionally-based characteristics, potentials and competitive advantages, rather than by simply copying the successful strategies of other regions;
7. Stresses that while regions can strive to pioneer new technologies, in order to tap into new markets, alternatively they can build on – and hence diversify – already existing knowledge, skills and abilities in related activities, should this be where the knowledge transfer is greatest (‘related diversity’);
8. Emphasises how important it is, in terms of strengthening regional economies, not to focus exclusively on individual areas of competitive advantage but also to create a value

¹ <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/home>

chain linking all stages of development and production, from basic research through application-oriented research and technology transfer to specific, usable products and business start-ups;

9. Encourages the regions to invest in cross-sector and cross-technology activities that can generate cross-cutting links throughout the regional economy so that a variety of businesses, as broad as possible, can contribute to as well as benefit from the generation of more growth and jobs; encourages, in this regard, the regions in particular to draw on and foster the potential of all types of SMEs – which per definition are micro, small and medium-sized enterprises¹ – as they act as regional drivers of innovation and are therefore of fundamental importance to the economy of each region.
10. Is of the opinion that the regions, when selecting their priorities, should – in addition to strengthening their innovation systems with a view to achieving greater competitiveness and added value – undertake actions that address structural and societal challenges within society, such as unemployment, poverty, energy security and demographic change;
11. Calls on the regions not to focus solely on technology-based innovation, but rather to base their strategies on as broad a notion of innovation as possible; hopes that account will be taken not merely of high-tech but also of low-tech – and, indeed, non-technical – innovation, such as process optimisation and organisational transformation; points specifically to social and environmental innovation in this context; stresses that the aim of innovation strategies should be to stimulate innovative practices;
12. Is aware that setting priorities is a sensitive procedure that regions undertake; believes, therefore, that the introduction of a review system would offer regions the opportunity to rethink their strategies; takes the view that the initial selection of meaningful results-oriented indicators and the quality of the contribution from the actors involved are key factors for the success of the smart specialisation strategy, reducing the risk of errors when priorities are set;

Closer involvement of actors within regions

13. Is of the opinion that the quality of cooperation between government and the relevant actors in regions will have a decisive influence on the success of the RIS3 strategy, and will markedly reduce the risk of wrong priority choices being made;
14. Underscores, in this connection, the importance of consulting with businesses, and with SMEs in particular, since a ‘vision of innovation’ will only be successful if businesses have the appropriate potential to put it into practice;
15. Stresses the need to rethink and, where necessary, expand all the consultation processes and target groups, so as to avoid missing future drivers of innovation; considers it particularly important to involve future entrepreneurs;

¹ Commission recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (2003/361/EC).

16. Makes it clear that, in the process of developing a shared vision, it is, for reasons of ownership and awareness-raising, fundamental that local and regional policy-makers, universities, research and innovation centres and businesses, as well as civil society and social actors, are as closely involved as possible;
17. Highlights the important role that close cooperation inside the knowledge triangle plays in the transfer of knowledge, for example in the framework of the European Institute for Research and Innovation or of regional innovation clusters and centres; underlines, in this regard, the importance of ‘investment in people’;
18. Calls on public and private stakeholders to use the many opportunities to fund these actions under the ERDF for 2014-2020, including by supporting the establishment of regional innovation incubators and by developing links and synergies between universities, other research and higher educational institutes, innovative and creative entrepreneurs and businesses, and business support providers and investors, as e.g. in the case of creative and cultural industries;
19. Is of the opinion that, for this process, appropriate structures and efficient administration need to be in place, and that administrative authorities and ministries must establish a culture of cooperation between themselves and in dealings with businesses and other actors; calls on regional and national decision-makers and authorities to modernise their internal procedures in line with the needs of the new ‘entrepreneurial discovery process’ and, in particular, to enter into a more intensive, long-term dialogue with the relevant actors; encourages SMEs, especially in regions with a high share of such enterprises, to collaborate through suitable platforms in order to strengthen their role in the smart specialisation process; recommends that, if necessary, resources available for capacity building should be used to empower administrations and stakeholders further;
20. Considers that all authorities and actors concerned at regional level should, if necessary, be offered high-quality training and seminars focused on issues related to the preparation and implementation of smart specialisation strategies;

Achieving funding programme synergies

21. Welcomes the Commission’s and the EU legislative authority’s successful efforts to improve the environment for synergies between the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and other EU programmes, such as COSME and, in particular, Horizon 2020, for instance through harmonised standard rates or combined funding¹;
22. Urges the regions to make full use of all funding, cooperation and investment opportunities, including upstream and downstream actions², in order to promote synergies between ESIFs and Horizon 2020 and, in so doing, to close the innovation gap between

¹ Article 55(8) and Article 57, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482, Article 17a, Legislative procedure 2011/0401 (COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0809, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0499, and Article 31, Legislative procedure 2011/0399 (COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0810, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0500.

² Annex I, point 4.3.2., Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482.

regions;

23. Calls, in this regard, on those regions that are lagging behind in terms of building research infrastructure and capacity to foster collaborative arrangements with research establishments of excellence, along the lines of ‘teaming / twinning for excellence’, in order to build up centres of excellence on their own that, in the future, will benefit the regional economy as a whole;
24. Calls on the regions, within the framework of the strategy, to give in-depth consideration to the question of how to attract investment in the private sector, since there is still considerable scope for boosting the investment potential in R&D&I in this sector;
25. Calls on all regional and national actors in charge of devising and implementing the RIS3 strategy, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) road map, the ESIFs and Horizon 2020 to cooperate more closely as regards planning and coordination, and, where necessary, to develop appropriate structures¹ to integrate the various tiers of government action; invites the Member States to exchange best practises on such structures;
26. Calls on DGs REGIO and RTD to persist in their efforts to ensure that programmes are compatible, in order that synergies may be created; underlines that joint support should be provided to national and regional authorities to aid in the design and implementation of their respective strategies; expects DGs REGIO and RTD to step up their cooperation in this regard, in particular by issuing guidance documents for the actors involved;
27. Welcomes all efforts to extend advisory services; is of the opinion that it would be beneficial if potential recipients of Horizon 2020 funding and relevant advisory bodies were to be involved as well in this exchange in an appropriate fashion;

Close cooperation of regions: the external dimension

28. Calls on the regions not only to improve their internal links between education and research institutions, businesses and the administration, but also to build alliances with other regions so as to supplement their own value chain;
29. Stresses out that opportunities will be fostered if close cooperation is established between the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) partners in the regions and the authorities and organisations involved in designing and delivering the RIS3 strategies as described in Annex IV in COM(2011)0615, 2011/0276(COD), C7-0335/2011, including partnership with regions hosting existing and potential co-location centres, such as Regional Implementation and Innovation Communities (RICs);
30. Considers it vital that regional specialisation strategies help create new European networks of excellence in a range of sectors, thereby helping to boost the European Union’s competitiveness and international profile;

¹ Annex I, point 4.1.2 b, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482.

31. Is of the opinion that regional cooperation is potentially of huge benefit, because of the knowledge and technology transfer involved, both to the regions themselves, in terms of their local economic strength, and to the EU as a whole; points in this regard to very successful collaborative arrangements such as, for instance, the 'Regions of knowledge' initiative;
32. Notes that many regions shy away from the complex analytical and coordinating efforts required; encourages the regions to make use of the option provided by the legislator whereby up to 15 % of the programme funding can be invested outside the programme area¹;
33. Points out that, in border areas, the challenges are often the same on both sides of the border owing to the common territorial features which these areas share; calls on the Commission and the Member States, and on local and regional authorities, to draw up cross-border smart specialisation strategies, and to establish cross-border clusters, making use of EU interregional cooperation funding;
34. Welcomes the territorial cooperation options provided for by the common strategic framework²; welcomes as well any other small-scale internationalisation action by the regions and by actors working on their behalf;
35. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.

¹ Article 60(2), legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482.

² Annex I, point 7.2., Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA-PROV(2013)0482.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

I. Political background to the report

At a time of economic recession and resulting budget constraints, and in an increasingly competitive global environment, it is crucial that the European Union should keep improving its capacity to innovate.

Past experience has shown that, in the absence of a comprehensive overall strategy, EU investment generally, including in research, development and innovation (R&D&I), has often failed to produce the desired results. Funding has been spread too widely, policy decisions have been taken at a level too remote from the reality on the ground and there has been a lack of networking among the various stakeholders and the tiers of administration concerned. Given budgetary and economic overstretch, spreading funding too widely, and too thinly, across a host of areas, including many not related to each other, is no longer practicable. In future, accordingly, areas to be given financial assistance must be selected with particular care. Effective cooperation among all those involved at every level will be crucially important in this respect.

In order to ensure more efficient use of the Structural Funds in future, the concept of ‘thematic concentration’ has been introduced into the relevant legislation, with 11 thematic objectives and various ‘ex-ante conditionalities’. In order to be able to draw on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in support of thematic objective no 1, regions are required to focus their investment in R&D&I via ‘smart specialisation strategies’. The preparation of such a strategy will be a compulsory precondition (i.e. an ex-ante conditionality) for accessing ERDF funding for R&D&I in the 2014-2020 programme planning period.

II. Legal framework for the RIS 3 strategy

In the absence of a national or research and innovation strategy for smart specialisation or if, by the date for approval of operational programmes, no action plan is in place to ensure the implementation of a strategy up to 2016, no ERDF funding will be made available for the thematic objective of R&D&I¹.

Furthermore, the following preconditions must be complied with:

- the strategy must be based on a SWOT analysis in order to focus resources on a limited number of research and innovation priorities;
- it must include measures to stimulate private investment in research, technology and development (RTD);
- it must include a monitoring and review system².

¹ Annex V, Table 1, Ex ante conditionalities, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

² Annex V, Table 1, Ex ante conditionalities, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

- Member States will adopt a framework outlining available budgetary resources for R&D&I, including a multiannual plan for budgeting and prioritisation of investments linked to EU priorities (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures – ESFRI).

The regions are currently in the crucial phase of the process of putting the 2014-2020 funding conditions in place. Member States and regions have been in negotiations for several months on what the partnership agreements and OPs (involving the Commission) should contain. In this new, ambitious process, not only the opportunities for the stakeholders involved, but also the challenges facing them, are starting to take shape. This report provides an interim assessment and calls for appropriate action by the various actors concerned with a view to implementing what has been laid down for the 2014-2020 programme planning period and beyond.

III. Key aspects of the strategy from the rapporteur's perspective

(a) Setting the 'right' priorities on the basis of a broad notion of innovation

Smart specialisation means that a region should set priorities for R&D&I funding in the light of its own strengths and comparative advantages. For that to happen, there must be a critical review of everything which has already been decided upon.

Setting priorities harbours risks, however. The 'wrong horse' might be backed, i.e. the market might develop in ways different from forecasts, for example, or most regional economic operators might 'miss the boat'. That must not be allowed to happen.

Every region is different. Nonetheless, a smart specialisation strategy provides opportunities for every region. Some regions are innovation leaders, e.g. in key technologies. For many other regions, for example, the 'right way' might be to opt for, and fund, 'related diversity'. That means moving into technologies, products and services that are related to its existing successful technologies or areas of skill, as the knowledge spillover effect will thus be maximised. Accordingly, regional knowledge and abilities potential is built on; areas with economic added value are targeted, thus opening up new markets.

Ideally, efforts should be focused on activities applicable across a range of sectors and on technologies that have an impact on the entire regional economy, including SMEs (cross-cutting links). In the process, regions should not neglect action to deal with the challenges facing society, such as healthy ageing, demographic change, energy transition and reindustrialisation.

It is therefore axiomatic, given this line of thinking, that the strategy should be based on a broad notion of innovation. The regions must therefore focus not only on technological innovation; rather, they should also take hidden innovation, low-tech innovation and non-tech innovation into consideration.

(b) All relevant stakeholders to be closely interlinked

In the rapporteur's view, cooperation between research and education stakeholders and businesses, and between them and tiers of government administration, must be fundamentally enhanced, given that that is the key basis for a successful strategy.

The crucial factor here is cooperation with business, in particular with SMEs, in order to establish whether the business potential of a region matches its priorities. Priorities, e.g. in some technologies, are the wrong priorities for a region if business is unable to act on them. It is furthermore important to know what the potential of businesses is with a view to subsequent involvement in Horizon 2020 too.

In the rapporteur's opinion, it is also important to review the traditional approach to consultation so that there is no risk of missing out on new developments in the innovation landscape. This also demands modern civil-service thinking - in how authorities deal with each other and how they deal with relevant stakeholders.

(c) Special focus on possible synergies between the entire range of funding options at all political levels

The strategy should ensure that synergies plus more incentives for private-sector investment - locally, regionally and internationally - emerge from the various regional, national and EU-level approaches and resources available. The strategy should therefore also include measures as to how private-sector capital inflows can be stimulated, i.e. how to find private international investors. Under many S3 strategies, there is still considerable room for improvement in that respect.

In future, it should be made easier to use the various European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) by means of a common framework regulation¹. In addition, however, combined use of the ESIF and Horizon 2020 in particular should be made easier, not least in order to make it easier for regions to participate in Horizon 2020 whose research infrastructure needs remain considerable and thus close the innovation gap between well equipped and less well equipped regions (widening participation / 'stairways to excellence')².

In this respect, the common strategic framework (CSF) and Horizon 2020 regulations provide for upstream and downstream measures³. For instance, SF monies are to be used to build capacities so as to make it possible to participate in Horizon 2020 and, in turn, transfer Horizon 2020 results to the market. The rapporteur would also point to 'teaming/twinning for excellence and innovation' arrangements, which appear to be particularly suited for expanding research infrastructure in a number of eastern European Member States. In this way, centres of excellence can be established which can be expected to have an extremely positive impact on entire regional economies.

¹ Annex I, point 3.2(a), Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

² Annex I, point 4.1, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

³ Annex I, point 4.3.2., Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

In general, it is difficult to coordinate what are totally different SF approaches and the Horizon 2020 programme. To make synergies possible in the first place, the financial provisions provide inter alia, under certain conditions, for a project to be funded from various sources¹. Major coordination efforts still need to be made in directorates-general, e.g. as regards defining costs.

The regions, for their part, need a great deal of advice. For instance, a Commission guide which addresses these issues is not being issued until autumn 2013. In this regard, cooperation between directorates-general has evidently been difficult. It must improve markedly, in particular as regards the projected advisory body².

Furthermore, an entirely new type of cross-cutting and vertical collaborative arrangement will have to be developed for the actors responsible for producing operational programmes and for Horizon 2020 implementation in the Member States and regions. Not only must funding priorities be coordinated. There must also be good communication between regions, national contact points and potential Horizon 2020 beneficiaries if synergies are genuinely to be achieved. Existing advisory bodies, such as the Enterprise Europe Network, ought to be expanded accordingly.

(d) Interaction with other regions

Not only improved relations between universities, other high-education establishments, business and government should be a factor in this; rather, under the strategy, the regions should also project themselves externally. That will enable them to benefit from other regions' knowledge and, at the same time, strengthen the EU's global competitive position.

A number of very successful cases in point in the area of key technologies have already emerged as part of the 'knowledge regions' initiative, such as, for example, 'Silicon Europe'.

Admittedly, only a handful of regions have produced such success stories.

The CSF provides a number of territorial cooperation options, some based on experience gained under the Seventh Framework Research Programme, e.g. cooperation between innovative research-intensive clusters and exchanges between research institutes³. Consideration could also be given to macro-region-based cooperation. There are appropriate technical arrangements for funding a project under two operational programmes and for making use of part of the funding outside the programme area⁴.

Whether or not the projected capping arrangement is practicable, in reality, remains to be

¹ Article 55(8) and Article 57, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615 Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

² Annex I, point 4.3.4., Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

³ Annex I, point 7.2.1, Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

⁴ Article 55(8), Legislative procedure 2011/0276(COD), based on proposal for a regulation COM(2011)0615, Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0482.

seen. At all events, this is bound to be a protracted process. However, many regions shy away from the major analytical and coordinating efforts required. For a number of regions, accordingly, it may make sense to take a more internationalised approach on a small-scale, through consultations and collaboration between individual businesses, as already takes place in an EEN context.

At all events, the Commission's support could be helpful in identifying possible cooperation partners without imposing a choice of priorities and specific collaborative arrangements on regions.

(e) Sound data and indicators for impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation purposes

Regional strategies should have a well sourced basis and include well designed monitoring and evaluation systems. In this respect, too, much improvement and support are still needed.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	28.11.2013
Result of final vote	+: 31 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Luís Paulo Alves, Victor Boştinaru, Nikos Chrysogelos, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Brice Hortefeux, Danuta Maria Hübner, Vincenzo Iovine, Seán Kelly, Mojca Kleva Kekuš, Jacek Olgierd Kurski, Petru Constantin Luhan, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Miroslav Mikolášik, Jens Nilsson, Jan Olbrycht, Younous Omarjee, Markus Pieper, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Oldřich Vlasák, Hermann Winkler, Joachim Zeller
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Karin Kadenbach, James Nicholson, Elisabeth Schroedter
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Jill Evans, Carmen Romero López