

Synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) & Research and Innovation Funding: The Stairway to Excellence

Date: 11 March 2016

Venue: e-Estonia Showroom <http://ulemistecity.ee/en/new-e-estonia-com-showroom-open/>
Ludvig Puusepp Building - Tallinn, Lõõtsa 2A - Estonia

Rationale

The development of Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) requires that European regions and Member States identify a limited number of research areas and industrial activities with high innovation potential at the regional or national level. These strategies have to be implemented using European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), which can also be combined with other types of funding. Supporting synergies between funding sources (also including COSME, ERASMUS+, and Creative Europe etc.) should deliver additional gains in terms of competitiveness in Horizon 2020 calls, innovation results that could contribute to closing the innovation gap in Europe and therefore promote economic growth, and overall have greater efficiency in the use of public funding.

The "Stairway to Excellence" project is centred on:

- The provision of assistance to Member States (MS) who joined the European Union since 2004 with the aim of closing the innovation gap and promoting excellence in EU regions and Member States;
- Stimulating the early and effective implementation of national and regional Smart Specialisation Strategies.

Objectives of the Conference

The principal objectives of this national event are:

- A better understanding of the Estonian national (and regional) innovation ecosystem(s) with a special emphasis on the identification of obstacles, barriers and potentials to innovation.
- Raising awareness of the actions needed to enable synergies between European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and other prog-rammes for research and innovation.
- Sharing experiences in combining Structural Funds and Framework Programmes (FP) (including Horizon 2020) to improve excellence in R&I systems.
- Drawing lessons for the future and identifying follow-up actions to enhance the potential synergies between different EU funds in Estonia.

Who should attend?

- *Planned Participants: 50*
- Estonian national and regional managing authorities (of ERDF, ESF, EARDF Operational Programmes) involved in the implementation of the Smart specialisation strategy.
- Estonian national contact points from the past Framework Programmes and Horizon 2020 and other EU-funded programmes.
- Estonian national and regional authorities in charge of smart specialisation strategies.
- Members of the Horizon 2020 programme committee.
- Selected national and international experts on EU funding programmes and regional policy.
- Selected representatives from businesses.
- Selected representatives from universities, research centres and other organizations with experience and/or interest in EU-funded programmes.

Organisers: European Commission, Directorate-General Joint Research Centre (DG JRC - S3 Platform) and the Estonian Research Council (ETAg). ETAg is the main research funding body in Estonia, reporting to the Ministry of Education and Research.

Agenda

10:00 – 10:20	Registration and welcome coffee
WELCOME SPEECH	
10:20 – 10:30	Viljar Lubi (Deputy Secretary General for Economic Development – Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication, Republic of Estonia)
OPENING SESSION – <i>The Research and innovation context and the implementation of synergies</i>	
10:30– 11:45	<p>Moderator: <i>Blagoy Stamenov (European Commission, DG JRC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synergies with R&I Funds: Stairway to Excellence Andrea Conte (European Commission, DG JRC) • Implementation of synergies between Horizon 2020 and Structural Funds in Estonia Mr. Taivo Raud (Ministry of Education and Research, Republic of Estonia) • Estonian profile in terms of FP participation and ESIF Nida Kamil Ozbolat (European Commission, DG JRC) • Horizontal aspects related to public sector financing Mari Lahtmets (Ministry of Finance, Republic of Estonia) • Questions & Answers
International experiences	
11:45 – 12:45	<p>Moderator: <i>Gérard Carat (European Commission, DG JRC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges and opportunities in linking public support with private sector business development. Indrek Tammeaid (Finsight OY) • Collaboration among Baltic states - Ramojus Reimeris (MOSTA- Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania) • "Teaming" synergies with Structural Funds in Poland Michał Pietras (Foundation for Polish Science) ❖ Questions & Answers
12:45-13:00	Coffee break
Synergies in Practice and table discussion	
13:00 – 14:30	<p>Table discussion topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Upstream activities and how to build capacity (25 minutes discussion)</i> • <i>Downstream activities and how to better exploit research results (25 minutes discussion)</i> • <i>Knowing each other's view: incentives, obstacles and opportunities by policy makers and innovation stakeholders for maximising societal impact of EU R&I funding instruments (25 minutes discussion)</i>
14:30 – 15:15	Lunch Break
Policy debate on the Estonian research and innovation ecosystem	
15:15 – 16:30	<p>Moderator: <i>Beate Grajnert (European Commission, DG REGIO)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting on the morning parallel tables discussion (30 min) • Design of the RIS 3 in the Estonian OP for the Cohesion Policy Funds Samu Tuominen (European Commission, DG REGIO) • Background and future developments of the Estonian Smart Specialisation Strategy. Kristjan Lepik (former coordinator at the Estonian Development Fund) ❖ Questions & Answers
16:30 – 16:45	Coffee break
Cases of Synergies implementation and related initiatives	
16:45-17:45	<p>Moderator: <i>Gérard Carat (European Commission, DG JRC)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected Health Cluster as a tool to boost synergy in one smart specialisation area in Estonia

	<p><i>Külle Tärnov (Health Cluster-Tallinn Science Park Tehnopol)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential of demand-side measures in Estonia. <i>Jari Romanainen</i> (Technopolis Group Baltics) • Public Procurement of Innovation <i>Vasileios TSANIDIS (European Commission, DG CNECT)</i> • Questions & Answers
17:45 – 18:00	<p>Conclusions and ways forward Moderator: <i>Andrea Conte (European Commission, DG JRC)</i></p>