

“Challenges and practicalities of interregional collaboration”

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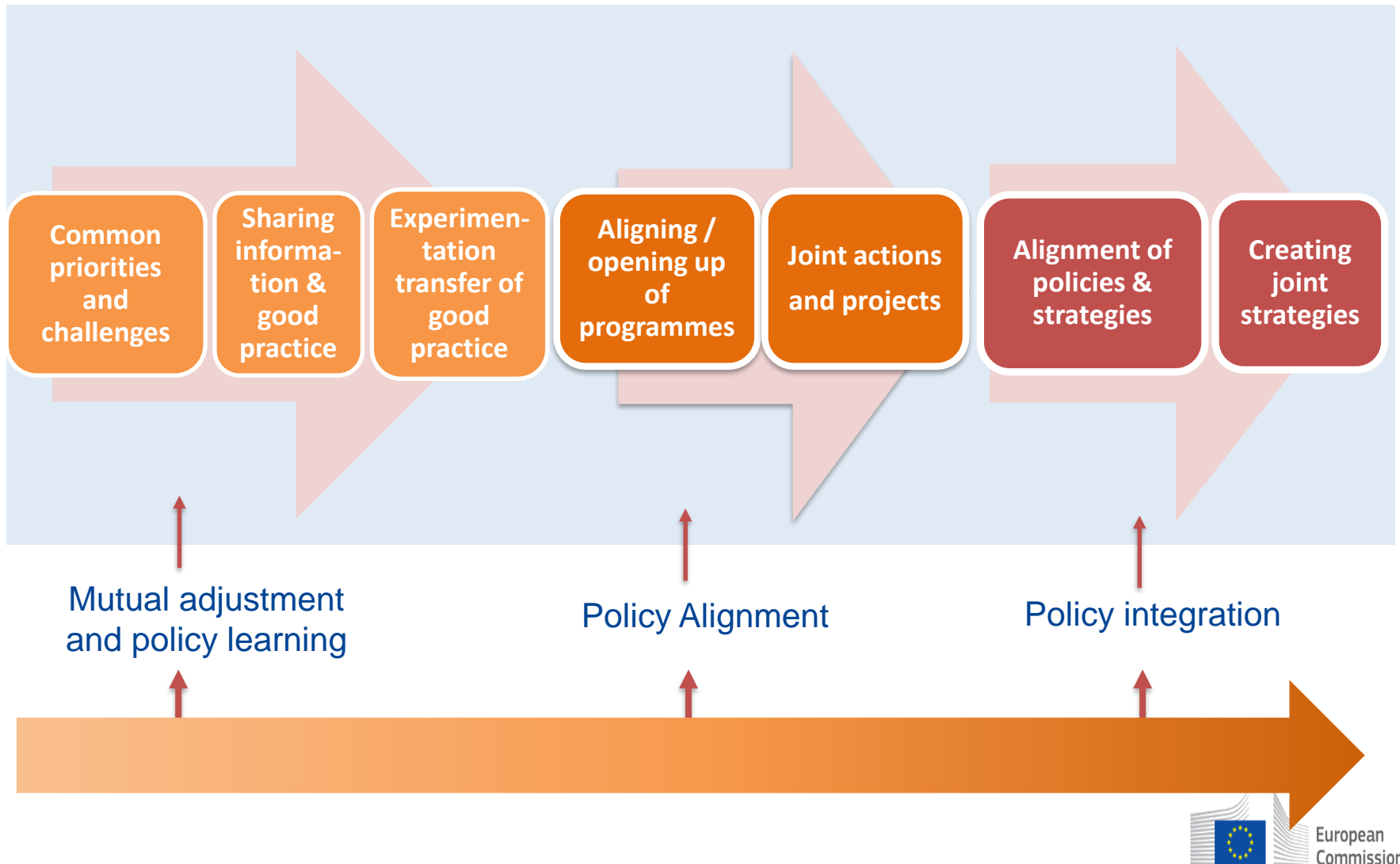
The study on interregional collaboration

Case studies include:

1. Puglia Region in Italy
2. Centro Region in Portugal
3. Western Hungary in Hungary
4. Croatia (national level)
5. Extremadura Region in Spain
6. Region of Western Macedonia in Greece
7. Nord-East Region and Centru Region in Romania
8. Kainuu Finland (with the BRIDGES Coordinator)

Kainuu (FI) a 'strong +' innovator, Centro (PT) a 'strong –' innovator, all the rest 'moderate' or 'modest' innovators (RIS 2017)

The continuum of interregional collaboration



Drivers and motivations for interregional collaboration

- Create critical mass and access complementary assets
- Address competence lock-ins and/or institutional or relational inertia
- Prevent government and institutional failures
- Improve conditions for entrepreneurial self-discovery
- Share costs and risks and overcome fragmentation
- Develop public goods and services
- motivations and drivers are different across different actors, e.g.:
 - For policy, it is policy and organisational learning a major motivation apart from meeting the needs of the region
 - For project beneficiaries, it is mainly the need to sustain / improve their businesses
- Overall, an underlying belief that innovation cannot be done behind closed doors and that certain challenges cannot be dealt with by a single country/region alone.

Barriers and challenges for interregional collaboration

- Lack of trust between potential partners and/or mismatch of objectives
- Asymmetric levels of policy competence and/or research capabilities
- Differences in levels of regional autonomy and regional R&I system governance
- Socio-cultural mismatch (e.g. language barriers)
- Legal or administrative barriers

Barriers and challenges for interregional collaboration

- Institutional / relational inertia
- Limited commitment of national stakeholders and/or insufficient engagement of regional stakeholders
- Limited resources (financial, human) or lack of synergies across funding sources
- Lack of collaborative links between local actors (research and businesses) or with foreign actors (MNC)
- Mind-set implying inferiority of actors in lagging regions and/or lack of level playing field in collaboration across lagging and non-lagging regions

The governance challenge

- Limited coordination across regions
- Limited coordination between national and regional levels; lack of shared understanding at regional and national levels
- Unclear responsibilities between national and regional levels or limited responsibilities at regional levels
- Different degrees of regional autonomy across countries
- Lack of human capital (including administrative capacities) to manage international collaboration

Question:

- **What are the structures/instruments that are necessary for multi-regional governance of participation in interregional collaboration (IC)?** What are the benefits?

The 'capitalisation' challenge

- Insufficient engagement of regional stakeholders
- Lack of common understanding with local research actors
- Weak or non-existent links between the business and research/academic community
- Lack of absorptive capacity that can hinder the ability of regional actors to gain knowledge from collaboration and retain it in-house in order to develop internal capacities

Question:

- **How can monitoring of projects be organised after they finish in view of capitalising on the results?**
- **Any suggestions for special activities and actors that need to get involved?**

The 'budgeting' challenge

- Limited resources (financial, human)
- Lack of synergies between national and European funds or among different European funds

Question:

- **Which types of resources should be in-house, and which can be outsourced?**
- **Any good examples of synergies among different European funds?**