

# S2E phases I & II (2014-2017)

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Synergies between Research and  
Innovation Funding Programmes



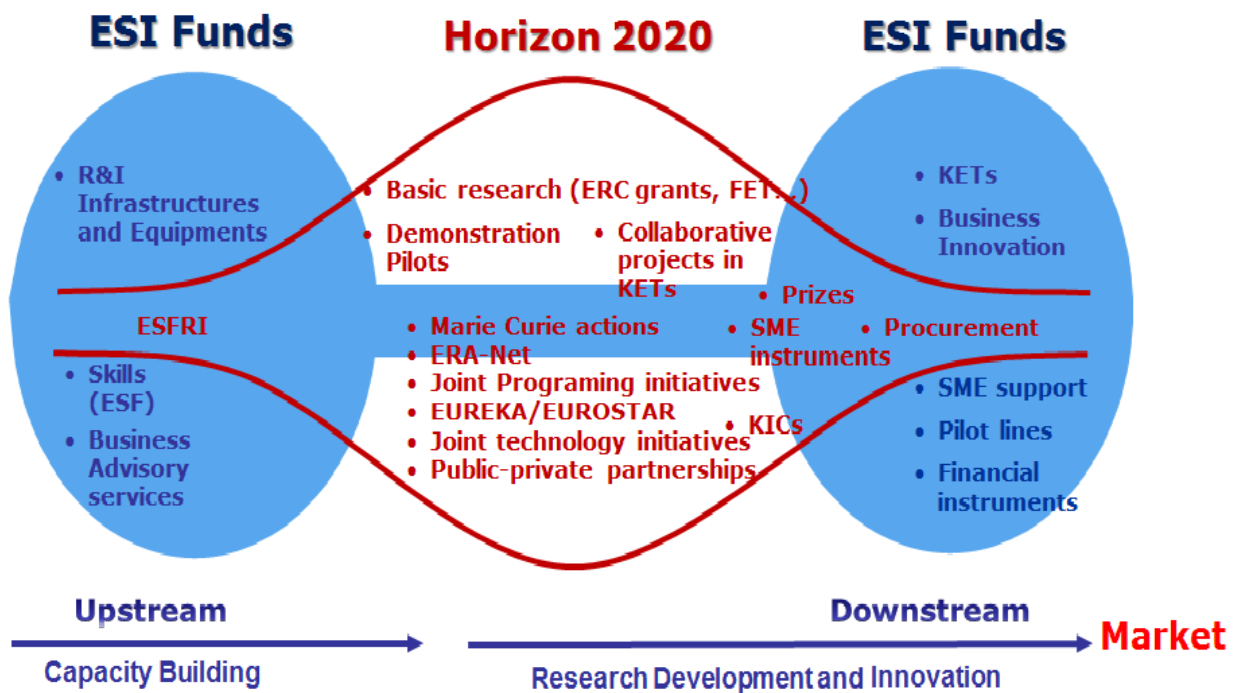
Implemented as part of the JRC's Smart Specialisation targeted support activities, the S2E project was initially centred on the provision of assistance to the 13 Member States (EU13) who joined the European Union in 2004 and subsequent years with the aim of closing the innovation gap and promoting excellence in Europe.

The 2014 S2E launch conference offered a first opportunity to identify the key elements for building successful synergies. A diverse set of experiences from five EU countries (CY, CZ, FR, ES and UK) were presented as a source of inspiration for regional and national managing authorities as well as the wider research community.

Over the period 2014-2017 the activities of S2E phases I & II included:

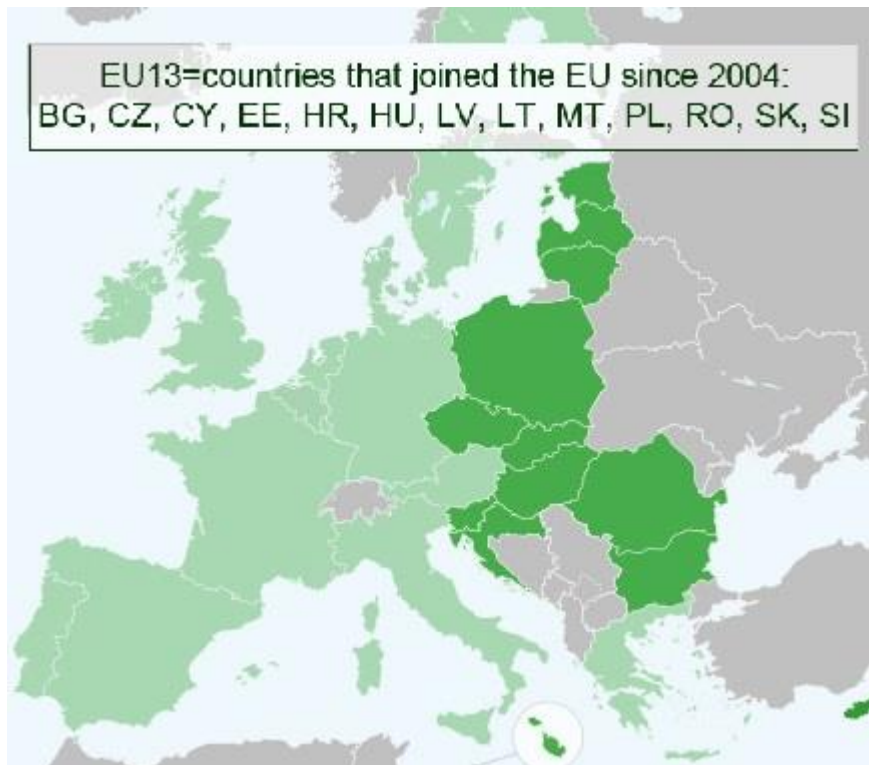
- National policy events in each of the EU13 Member States to:
  - i. raise awareness of the actions needed to enable synergies between different EU funding programmes for research and innovation;

- ii. share experiences in combining funding from Structural Funds and Framework Programme to improve excellence in R&I systems and
  - iii. draw lessons for the future and identify follow-up actions to enhance potential synergies
- National and Regional Fact & Figures, a set of statistical indicators on the deployment of FP/ H2020 and Structural Fund/ ESIF for each of the EU13 countries and regions
  - S2E Country Reports for each EU13 countries
  - Practical Synergies Examples between different innovation-related EU funding
  - Fiches on a selection of European instruments/ platforms/ concepts



A tool was also developed:

- The [R&I Regional Viewer](#) (ESTAT/ ESIF/ H2020 data) allowed to visualize and compare Research & Innovation investments under different funding channels and EU programmes across EU Regions, i.e. economic indicators from Eurostat, planned R&I-related investments under ESIF, and Horizon 2020 funding captured by stakeholders.



### **Rationale**

European Commission Framework Programmes (FP) for research and technology development have been vital in the development of European competitiveness, growth and knowledge generation. However, there is considerable disparity across EU countries and regions in terms of FP participation and innovation performance.

Horizon 2020 has continued to provide funding on the basis of excellence, regardless of geographical location. However, it has also introduced novel measures for "spreading excellence and widening participation" by targeting low Research & Innovation (R&I) performing countries - most of whom have been eligible for innovation funding under Cohesion Policy for the period 2014-2020.

In addition, the revised regulations for ESIF (2014-2020) have aimed to use funds more effectively to build regional/national excellence and capacities. By doing so, the two funding sources (ESIF and Horizon 2020) have complemented each other along the entire innovation process.

### **RIS3 and support of S3P**

The development of good national/ regional research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3) has been considered essential for sustaining efforts at regional/ national level over time. Therefore, the support by the Smart Specialisation Platform (S3P) to EU13 countries (\*) and regions to design and upgrade their RIS3 has been highly valuable.

The process of defining a RIS3 strategy allows members states and regions to identify a limited number of priority areas of good quality research and high value added industrial activities to be

further reinforced and developed using ESIF. Establishing synergies with potential H2020 funding can scale up the innovation potential of these regions by making their research system more excellent and competitive in international terms.

The two EU funding sources (ESIF and H2020) provide significant support for research, development and innovation (R&D+i). Supporting synergies in their use may deliver additional gains in terms of innovation results, close the innovation gap in Europe and promote economic growth. Enhancing a better combination of R&D+i strategies is an important component of the DG REGIO's work programme as a contribution to the Union's regional policy.

(\*) EU13 countries: BG, CZ, CY, EE, HR, HU, LV, LT, PL, SK, SI, MT, RO

RIS3 is a process, at the end of which regional/national strategies should identify activities, in which an investment of resources is likely to stimulate knowledge-driven growth.

[Eye@RIS3](#) is an online database, intended as a tool to help strategy development rather than a source of statistical data.