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# **The Preparation of National Strategic Reference Frameworks in the EU Member States**

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*Governance of Territorial Strategies: Going Beyond Strategic Documents  
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# European Policies Research Centre

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- specialises in comparative research on public policy throughout Europe
- focus on monitoring and analysis of regional development policies at European and national levels
- policy advice and exchange of experience through two networks:
  - *IQ-Net (Improving the Quality of Programme Management)* – regional and national Structural Fund programme management authorities from 12 Member States [www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/](http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/)
  - *EoRPA (European Regional Policy Research Network)* - national government departments responsible for regional policy – 10 countries



# Preparation of National Strategic Reference Frameworks in the EU Member States

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- Developing the NSRFs: questions and status
- Approaches to preparing the NSRFs
  - top-down vs bottom up approaches
  - partnership and consultation
- Content of the NSRFs:
  - scope
  - strategic and regional contexts
  - basis for policy
  - goals and development paths

# Developing the National Strategic Reference Frameworks

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- Processes of strategy development are complex and varied
- Questions of interpretation:
  - What is an NSRF and how does it differ from a CSF?
  - What are the Commission's expectations?
- Questions of approach:
  - Future funding – How much? Under which objectives?
  - Institutional/policy factors – How does it fit with the domestic institutional and policy context?
  - Organisational factors - Who leads/decides? who involved?
  - Lisbon NRPs – What linkage, influence on NSRFs?
  - Current approach to SF implementation – What has been the experience to date? What needs to change?



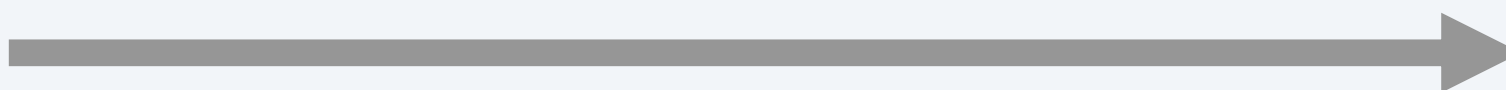
# Developing the NSRFs: Current status?

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*First Drafts*

*Subsequent drafts*

*Final drafts*



*Finland, Germany,  
Ireland, Luxembourg,  
Portugal, Spain,  
Sweden, United  
Kingdom*

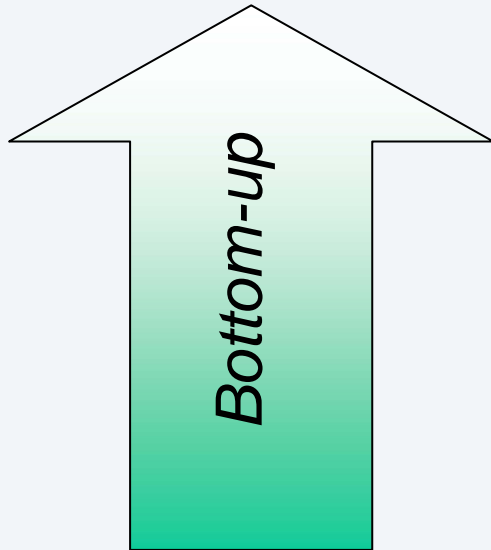
*Belgium, Czech  
Republic, Denmark,  
France, Greece,  
Hungary, Italy,  
Poland*

*Austria, Latvia,  
Malta, Netherlands,  
Slovakia*

# Approaches to NSRF development: top-down vs bottom-up

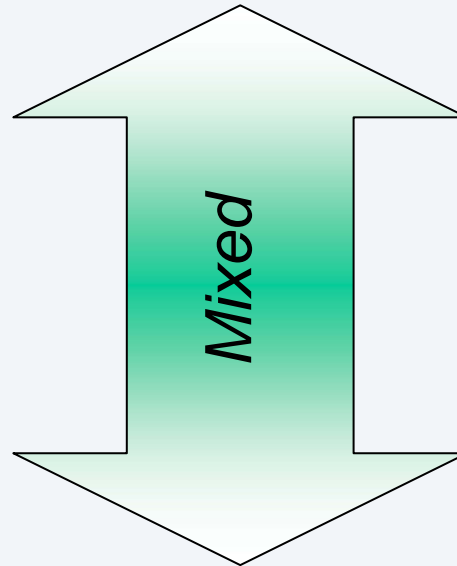
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National Strategic Reference  
Framework



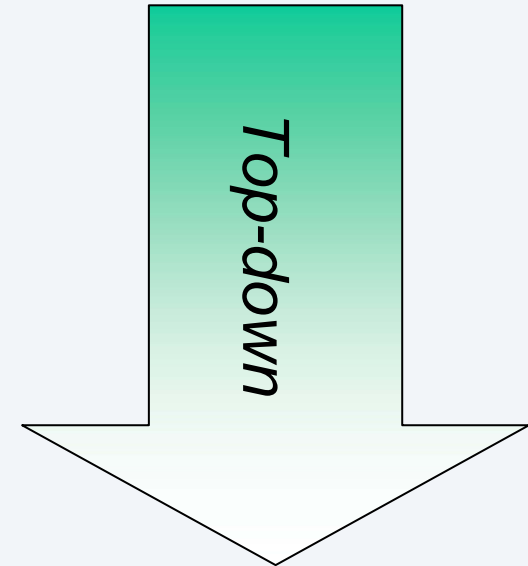
Regional input

National Strategic Reference  
Framework



Regional input

National Strategic Reference  
Framework

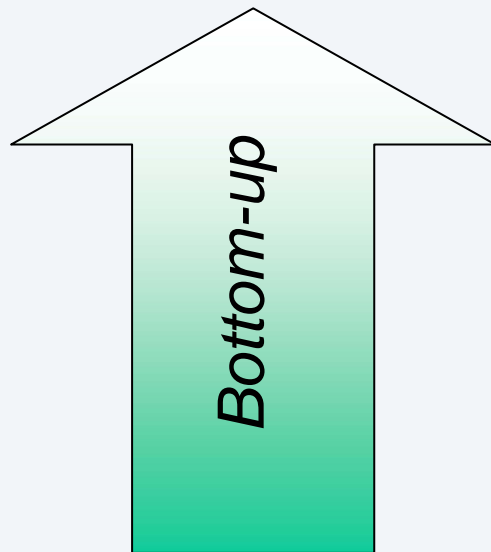


Regional input

# Approaches to NSRF development: bottom-up processes

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National Strategic Reference  
Framework



Regional input

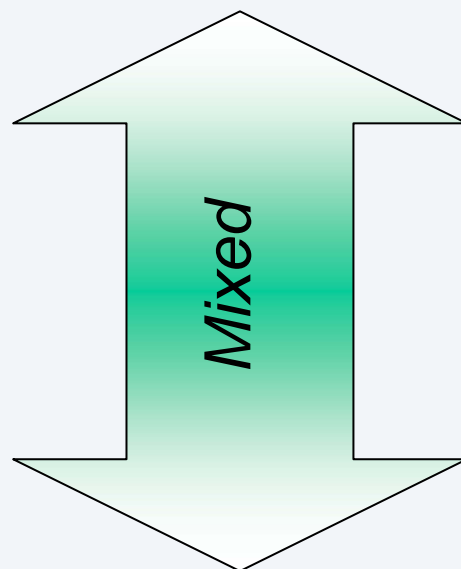
## Examples:

**Belgium:** separate sub-sections of the NSRF drafted by the Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels regions, in consultation with sub-regional authorities

**Germany:** NSRF based on analyses and regional strategies of the *Länder*, with coordination and overall strategic context by the federal government (BMF/BMWA)

# Approaches to NSRF development: mixed/collaborative processes

## National Strategic Reference Framework



## Regional input

## Examples:

**Austria:** collaborative approach to NSRF involving federal and *Länder* authorities; series of 7 partner workshops organised by ÖROK and close coordination in drafting

**Finland:** drafting undertaken by NSRF Committee combining national ministries and regional representatives; baseline provided by 2005 enquiry into regional needs

**France:** DIACT-coordinated process, with drafting of NSRF by inter-ministerial group and regional representatives; inter-regional and sub-regional consultation

**Italy:** collaborative approach to NSRF combining national and regional strategies; drafting undertaken by 10 working groups of national/regional representatives plus thematic tables/conferences

**Sweden:** NSRF process led by Min. of Industry, Employment & Communications; starting point was Reg. Dev/Growth Progs; draft developed through regional conferences & national conference

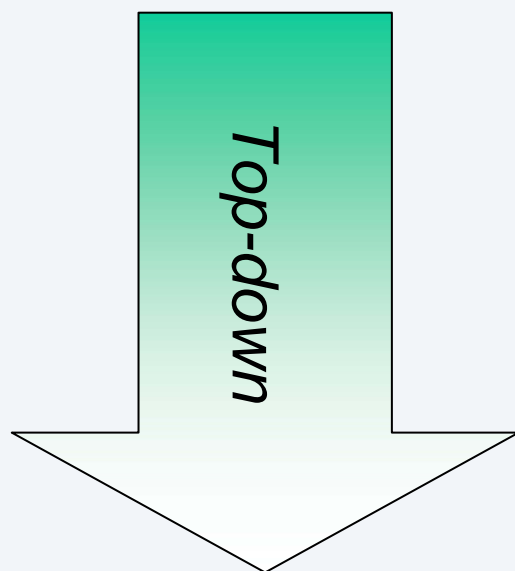
**United Kingdom:** DTI-led process, with separate sections by DCLG (England), Scottish Executive, WEFO (Wales) and NIE (N.Ireland); opened to partner consultation

EPRC

# Approaches to NSRF development: top-down processes

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**National Strategic Reference  
Framework**



**Regional input**

**Examples:**

**Czech Republic:** NSRF drafting by Ministry of Regional Development, based on NDP and working groups of state agencies, regions, economic and social partners etc

**Hungary:** NSRF led by National Development Office, coordinating central government inputs; regional representatives involved in working groups; consultation via regional working groups of RDAs/Regional Councils

**Latvia:** NSRF drafted by central government (led by Ministry of Finance) and opened for comment by regions, NGOs etc

**Netherlands:** NSRF led by Ministry of Economic Affairs, coordinating inter-ministerial discussions and subsequent consultation with provincial authorities

**Poland:** NSRF coordinated by Ministry of Regional Development, based on central government inputs and consultation with regions

**Slovakia:** NSRF drafted by inter-ministerial working group, with extensive consultation via 'Expert Group - Partnership for National Framework' ("88 meetings")

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# NSRF development: partnership and consultation

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- Complexity means that consultation, partnership and coordination are key components of strategy development
- Some authorities aim to engage in more **extensive** and **inclusive** consultation processes
- Others adopt more **technocratic** and **targeted** processes, involving key partners at particular stages
- Most frequently, elements of both approaches are used at various stages in the process

# NSRF development: partnership and consultation

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- Use of national and/or regional **working groups**, e.g. Austria, Czech Rep, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia
- **Conferences, seminars, hearings and workshops**, e.g. Austria, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Sweden, UK
- Use of **external consultants** e.g. Austria, Finland, France, Italy, Germany, Hungary
  - drafting documents
  - involvement in evaluations
  - feedback on draft documents or proposed strategies
- Drafts put out for **partner consultation** e.g. Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, United Kingdom



# National Strategic Reference Frameworks: Content

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- Strategic context
- Regional eligibility
- Policy basis
- Scope of NSRFs
- Overall goals
- Development paths

# NSRFs: Strategic context

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- National strategies
  - National Development Plans: new Member States, EU15 Cohesion countries
  - national spatial/regional development strategies: e.g. Ireland, Netherlands
- Regional strategies
  - long-standing regional development strategies e.g. Austria, Belgium, France, Germany
  - first/second generation regional strategies: e.g. Finland, Italy, Sweden, UK
  - emerging regional strategies e.g. Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland

# NSRFs: Territorial eligibility

## Challenges from a diverse map of regional eligibility in some countries:

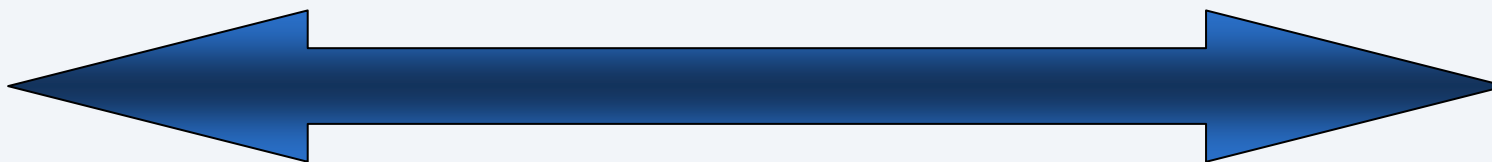
	Convergence	Phasing-out	Phasing-in	Competitiveness & employment
<b>Greece</b>	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thessalia, Ipeiros, Ionia Nisia, Dittiki Ellada, Peloponnisos, Voreio Aigaio, Kriti	Kentriki Makedonia, Dytiki Makedonia, Attiki	Stereia Ellada, Notio Aigaio	
<b>Portugal</b>	Norte, Centro Alentejo, Açores	Algarve	Madeira	Lisbon
<b>Spain</b>	Andalucia Castilla-La Mancha Extremadura Galicia	Asturia, Ceuta Melilla, Murcia	Canarias, Castilla y León Comunidad Valenciana	Aragón, Balerares Cantabria, Cataluña La Rioja, Madrid Navarra, País Vasco

# NSRFs: Basis for policy

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Policy-driven  
strategies

Needs-driven  
strategies



Finland  
Netherlands  
Sweden  
United Kingdom

Greece  
Hungary  
Italy  
Poland

# NSRFs – Scope and strategic focus

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- Mostly broad and general
  - Either deliberately (e.g. Germany, UK and France).....
    - ...or as a result of the need to accommodate various views/interests (e.g. Italy)
- Focused
  - Austria and Denmark (Lisbon)
  - Finland (focused on specific needs of regions)

# NSRFs: Overarching goals

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- Higher **national growth/competitiveness** is an overarching objective for all countries
- Strategic objectives encompass:
  - **European convergence** – new Member States
  - **national convergence** – Germany, Italy
  - increased **national/regional competitiveness** through innovation and the knowledge economy – all countries
  - regional **growth and productivity** e.g. Greece, Germany, Hungary, Sweden, UK
  - **employment creation and/or** qualification of human resources e.g. Austria, Denmark, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden
  - **territorial attractiveness and/or specific spatial problems** e.g. Austria, France, Czech Republic, Hungary, Nordic countries

# NSRFs: Development paths

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- **Contextual interventions** (services of general economic interest/collective services, institutional and market reforms) – Hungary, Italy, Finland
- **Innovation, R&D, knowledge economy** – all countries
- **Growth pole/competitiveness pole** strategy – Austria, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland
- **Other key themes:**
  - o sustainable development/gender mainstreaming (Austria)
  - o territorial cooperation (Austria, Sweden)
  - o balanced regional structure (Czech Republic, Finland, France)
  - o attractiveness of urban/rural areas (Germany)
  - o development of peripheries and special-type regions (France, Hungary, Sweden)

## Conclusions

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- Member States at different stages of development
- Varied approaches to developing the NSRFs
- Content influenced by national/regional strategies and territorial eligibility
- Policy-driven vs needs-driven strategies
- Strong influence of Lisbon
- Challenges of translating NSRFs into programmes