EXPERT EVALUATION NETWORK
DELIVERING POLICY ANALYSIS ON THE
PERFORMANCE OF COHESION POLICY 2007–2013

Task 1: POLICY PAPER ON INNOVATION

GREECE

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CONTENTS

1   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Innovation and entrepreneurship in Greece are hampered in this programming period not only by persistently unfavourable structural characteristics but also by macroeconomic tensions and the difficulty of the state to provide funding. Past investments and improving policy designs could not transform the country into a knowledge economy, mainly because business confidence could not increase.

In terms of regional development for the first time Greece is now composed of three types of regions: *phasing in*, *phasing out* (the highest share of the population) and *convergence* (the majority in terms of number of regions) with a common denominator of limited involvement of the business sector in research and poor innovation culture. The articulation of national and regional policies reflects this: the same rationale for innovation promotion is applied and in most cases national calls with common objectives are launched using both national and regional funds. Regions have now comparatively higher budgets than in the past but less authority over implementation. This increasing concentration of power in the national administration is a matter of convenience; it speeds up implementation, since regions do not have the administrative skills to deal with innovation policy. The downside is that in this way regions miss an opportunity of policy learning.

Policy design is slightly improving and the measures adopted by and large respond to the challenges identified, but several problems indicate that the impact will fall short of expectations: absorption is late and low; most measures are replications of existing schemes, which were not so successful in the past; the demand side (in particular from the business sector) is concentrated in the phasing out and phasing in regions, which have less ERDF funding. On the positive side the impact on the research capabilities is visible in many regions; progress in the daily handling and selection process may improve performance compared to the past.

Innovation friendly environment and ICT support and dissemination are the main areas addressed, followed by boosting applied research and product development. The ERDF contribution is significant for all measures, as the country itself has very limited national resources. However, overall, it is practically impossible to express a firm opinion on future performance because there are no previous evaluations and measures are only starting to be implemented.

The challenges are still focused on the limited participation of the business sector in RTDI, further central and regional governance improvement as well as the reduction of intra-country regional disparities. The existing policy has not produced the expected result over almost two decades, so probably a more radical approach is needed: concentration of resources, better policy implementation and overall improvement in innovation governance. Only systematic evaluations will allow the administration to adopt new, more ambitious evidence-based policies. A radically new option may indeed be too risky under the present macroeconomic circumstances, so no major

changes are recommended within this programming period. But at least, if the prevailing model survives, it is imperative to link it to very strong performance indicators, otherwise another programming period will end without any significant contribution to a change of the national development model.

2 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INNOVATION POLICY AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ERDF

2.1 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INNOVATION POLICY

Greek RTDI policy is characterised by a paradox: Economic growth and improving RTDI policies were unable to help restructure the economy and cross the threshold to a knowledge-based society. Persistent above-EU average growth for a decade was not coupled with improving competitiveness and business innovation. Despite increasing investments as percentage of GDP compared to 2005 (base year of NSRF 2007–2013), the competitiveness of the country has declined significantly since 2005[1]. In terms of ease of doing business the ranking of the country in the World Bank's yearly reports has either stagnated or worsened, depending on the indicator analysed. Transparency international ranks Greece much lower than any other member state. In all rankings Greece has stagnated or deteriorated. Permanent administrative inadequacies and structural characteristics have further deteriorated during recent years[2] and this climate is unfavourable to entrepreneurship and innovation. This determines the limits of innovation policy.

Public resources for Science, Technology and Innovation increased in the last decades and the policy mix has improved over time adapting to challenges. This, however, could not trigger multiplication effects; the structure of the economy remains low-tech and the past challenges prevail. As a consequence the international economic crisis, combined with significant national macroeconomic imbalances, triggered an emergency situation in 2009–2010. One can see this paradox as a vicious circle: starting with a low innovation culture resources and design are improving; however policy implementation does not respond to business expectations and as a consequence companies continue to under-invest in science and technology.

The national government is optimistic as manifested by the NSRF 2007–13: the aim is (once again) to transform Greece into a highly competitive, extrovert economy based on education, youth, quality, technology and innovation as well as respect for the natural environment. Innovation,

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[1] According to the most recent reports by international organisations (WEF, IMD)

[2] National Strategic Report NSRF 2007–2013, Executive Summary, p.1

research and entrepreneurship shift increasingly to the core of a knowledge-based development model. The private sector is considered the engine of growth.[3]

The Greek administration is centralised. Innovation is a responsibility of the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) but governance has never been exemplary nor was it particularly stable. The preparation and implementation of the current programming period is characterised by:

- The political authorities focusing on the status research establishments more than on policy design, leaving the latter to the administration alone;

- a re-organisation of the GSRT reporting to the Ministry of Education rather than Competitiveness, as in the past and

- the creation of parallel and successive structures of design and implementation (Management Authority, Special Agency for Coordination and Implementation of RTDI). These emergence governance measures create additional frustration to the administration.

At the same time, positive development in terms of governance is a mandatory consultation process introduced for all public interventions for the first time in 2010, the extensive use of foreign experts for the selection of proposals, giving credibility to the exercise and non-intervention to influence selection results (something that occurred often in the past).

The newly reorganised Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping carries responsibility for investments and entrepreneurship development (via the Organisation for SMEs) and thus indirectly affects innovation. More innovation is expected in the areas of energy and environment.

Efforts to decentralise are being made but economic policy and business activities remain concentrated in the capital area. Innovation policy resources are managed by the ministries located in the capital and funds are distributed all over the country by calls for tenders/proposals designed centrally. Regional innovation policies exist but are highly influenced by the decisions and management of the national administration.

The country's strategic planning for the 2007 – 2013 period is implemented through nine sectoral Operational Programmes (OPs)[4], and five Regional Operational Programmes[5] (ROPs). Even though the latter emphasise the specific characteristics and requirements of each region, the common

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[3] Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, General Secretariat for Investments and Development, National Strategic Report NSRF 2007-2013, Athens, December 2009, p.24, European Commission, INNO-Policy TrendChart – Innovation Policy Progress Report Greece 2009

[4] namely Environment – Sustainable Development, Accessibility Improvement, Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship, Digital Convergence, Human Resource Development, Education and Lifelong Learning, Public Administration Reform, Technical Support for Implementation, National Contingency Reserve

[5] Thessalia – Sterea Ellada – Ipiros, Crete and the Aegean Islands, Attica, Western Greece – Peloponnesus – Ionian Islands, Central Macedonia – Western Macedonia – Eastern Macedonia & Thrace

denominator of all ROPs is to improve transport and communication networks, increase trade, create employment, promote cultural diversity, protect the environment and improve tourism amenities[6].

The country is divided into thirteen regions, out of which: Sterea Ellada and South Aegean Islands are "phasing in" regions under the Competitiveness Objective, eight (Eastern Macedonia & Thrace, Western Greece, Peloponnesus, Ionian Islands, Crete, Thessalia, Ipiros, North Aegean Islands) have Convergence Objective status and three (Attica, Central Macedonia and Western Macedonia) are "phasing out" regions of the Convergence Objective.[7]

The interaction between national and regional innovation policy is rather complex. It has gone through a major change in this programming period but *it is pre-mature to decide whether the change was for the better or not*. In the previous CSF the bulk of the funds for RTDI came from the Sectoral Operational Programme of Competitiveness: they were managed centrally and distributed through competitive calls for proposals. The thirteen regions earmarked small amounts from their own ROPs and had full authority to decide how to spend these resources in regionally determined programmes or in cooperation with the national calls. This principle has been reversed for the 2007–2013 period: the bulk of the RTDI resources now comes from the ROPs, but calls are coordinated by the central administration (in this case the General Secretariat for Research and Technology, of the Ministry of Development). Annex D summarises this schematically. This may be a trend for centralisation or simply a matter of convenience.

The rationale of this central initiative and coordination is that the regions proved unable to implement effective RTDI policies in the previous programming period. The reasons were insufficient human resources and an unfavourable legal framework. As neither of the two could be modified in the short term, for efficiency reasons it was decided to take initiatives at the central level. Corroborating evidence that this was not an effort to centralise is that the request for this new scheme came from the regional authorities themselves. Conversely, this re-centralisation process has deprived the regional civil service from an opportunity to take initiatives, experiment and learn. A second vicious circle emerges: regions do not have the resources to plan and implement innovation policy, hence the central administration does it and as a consequence the regions do not acquire the necessary policy skills.

The main sectoral measures supporting innovation include ICT, support to entrepreneurship and (as yet) five RTDI programmes: *Cooperation*, *Innovation Vouchers*, *New Innovative Companies (spin offs, spin outs), support of new SMEs and support of groups of SMEs for RTD*. More measures are announced but as the gap between announcements and implementation has often been

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[6] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/country2009/el_en.pdf p.1

[7] Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, General Secretariat for Investments and Development, National Strategic Report NSRF 2007–2013, Athens, December 2009, p.121

insurmountable in the past, the impact of announcements is not taken into consideration. The main priorities of the five ROPs are the improvement of the competitiveness and extroversion of the regional economies of the country. Within this framework, besides the national interventions implemented mainly via the OP "Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship" co-funded by the ROPs, there are some schemes that are implemented by the regions themselves, focusing on supporting innovation and research, by modernising technology infrastructure of R&D and educational institutes.

Role of ERDF

A total of 20,4 billion € is allocated to Greece[8] , out of which 3,7 billion channelled by the Cohesion Fund on national projects, emphasising the "phasing in" regions (S. Aegean Islands and Sterea Ellada). The remaining 16,7 billion € are distributed as follows: the five regional programmes described above are funded by the ERDF, and eight sectoral programmes are co-funded by the ERDF, the Cohesion Fund and the ESF. If analysed by Objective, €635 million will fund the Competitiveness and Employment Objective and €19,6 billion the Convergence Objective. 6,5 million € of the latter are allocated to the "phasing out" regions (Central and Western Macedonia and Attica) and the rest to the other eight regions.

Innovation is supported directly via the RTDI support measures of the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) of the Ministry of Education and indirectly via measures for the information society and entrepreneurship via the Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping. All objectives are eligible for the five GSRT measures mentioned above, which are analysed together in detail in the following section. In addition, announcements are made of measures that may have indirect impact on innovation:

Within the **Competitiveness Objective**, as indicated in Table 1 of Annex A, the main measures in the context of the ROPs "Thessalia – Sterea Ellada – Ipiros" and "Crete and the Aegean Islands" include the "*Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services*",[9] funded by the sectoral OP "Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship" and by each ROP according to the needs of each region.[10]

Within the **Convergence Objective** the main national measures (using national and regional funding) include:

The Competitiveness OP, which includes:

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[8] Cohesion Policy 2007-13, European Cohesion Policy in Greece,
http://www.espa.gr/elibrary/Xrimatodotiki_Katanomi_2007-2013.pdf

[9] Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, General Secretariat for Investments and Development, National Strategic Report NSRF 2007-2013, Athens, December 2009, p.62

[10] Table 1 of Annex A includes budget data

"*I save*", implemented in the period 2009-11 with a total budget of 100 million €, aiming to enhance energy efficiency in municipal buildings, transportation means etc through the implementation of good practices, adoption of new techniques and raising the awareness of citizens, local authorities, companies and other institutions.[11]

 "Reinforcement of Youth Entrepreneurship" and "Support to female entrepreneurship" which started under the OP Competitiveness 2000-2006.

"Technological clusters in microelectronics Corallia – second phase", which aims at accelerating the development of the microelectronics industry in Greece, one of the least developed sector in the country.[12]

Additionally to "OP Competitiveness", "OP Digital Convergence" aims at increasing productivity and competitiveness and boosting innovation through technology transfer. Two measures have an innovative element and support dissemination of ICT in the business sector and the civil service: "*Improvement of everyday life through Information and Communication Technology*", the e-security action "*Aid to enterprises to make investments in e-security*"[13] and "*Issuance and Management of an e-Card for the Unified Fund of the Self-employed*".[14]

Within the ROP "Western Greece – Peloponnesus – Ionian Islands" regionally embedded schemes are: "Aid to research infrastructures in acclaimed research bodies and research centres in Peloponnesus region", and "Infrastructures of Technology, Innovation and Research Transfer and Dissemination Bodies". The former envisages channelling 15.798.936 € for supporting research infrastructures (educational and research institutes, as well as ministries and public institutions) in the region, while the latter will fund (with a budget of 5.449.736 €) projects for strengthening the infrastructures of public organisations supervised by the Ministry of Development, which have mandates for transferring and disseminating technology, innovation and research & development results of the Region of Western Greece.[15]

Finally, the scheme "Education Infrastructures in the Region East Macedonia – Thrace" within the ROP "Central Macedonia–Western Macedonia–Eastern Macedonia & Thrace" will allocate 40 million € for the construction and upgrading of tertiary-education premises in the region.[16]

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[11] PRO INNO – Europe: INNO-Policy Trendchart: Greece – Trendchart Support measures result

[12] PRO INNO – Europe: INNO-Policy Trendchart: Greece – Trendchart Support measures result

[13] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=916

[14] INNO-Policy TrendChart – Innovation Policy Progress Report Greece 2009, p.16

[15] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=466,
http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=631

[16] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=570

2.2 ERDF CONTRIBUTION ACROSS POLICY AREAS

As indicated in Table 2 of Annex A, the main focus of ERDF funding is to create and support an innovation friendly environment in the country. This absorbs the majority of funds, while boosting applied research and product development ranks second.

Within the innovation friendly environment policy area, projects aim to increase the diffusion of information and communication technologies among citizens and SMEs and promote e-governance and e-health justified by the low ranking of the country in ICT utilisation. "*Cooperation*", which supports university–industry linkages, is also a major programme in this category. At the moment proposals to the order of 66,6 million Euros are under negotiation. The main schemes designed to boosting applied research and product development are "*Innovation vouchers for SMEs*", expected to support approximately 1200 projects in SMEs nationwide, "*Reinforcement of Youth Entrepreneurship*", "*Support to female entrepreneurship*", "*I save*". Schemes that apply in both policy areas are "*I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs*", "*I innovate 2009 – Enterprises*" and "*Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services (in the context of the ROPs)*". The latter is funded with 1,05 billion € in total (EU contribution and national funding, for all ROPs). The rest of the fund is allocated to knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters, namely in R&TD infrastructure, technology transfer and assistance to R&TD in SMEs, implemented via national schemes, such as "*Creation – support to new innovative enterprises, notably highly knowledge intensive (Spin-off and Spin-out)*", "*Support of groups of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) for Research & Technology Development activities*", and "*Support of start-ups for Research & Technology Development activities*".

Under the *Competitiveness and Employment Objective*, innovation friendly environment and boosting applied research and product development are funded almost equally (99 million € and 93 million € respectively). The comprehensive measures are designed to assist the enterprises of the two phasing-in regions, Sterea Ellada and South Aegean Islands, in adopting more effective managing systems and innovative production processes, in order to raise their competitiveness domestic and abroad, invest in R&D, maintain and, if possible, increase their development rates and further boost the competitiveness of the regional economies, assisting in this way the weaker regions as well.[17] The rest of the ERDF fund is allocated to knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters (52 million €).

Regarding the *Convergence Objective*, the establishment of an innovation friendly environment is clearly the priority: 1,4 billion € out of almost 2,5 billion are allocated to innovation. The policy area "boosting applied research and product development" absorbs 812 million €. The rest of the

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[17] Programming Period 2007-2013, ROP "Crete and the Aegean Islands", Athens, September 2007, p.113, Programming Period 2007-2013, ROP "Thessalia, Sterea Ellada, Ipiros", Athens, September 2007, p.145-6

funding - 236 million € - is channelled to knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters. The main initiative in this direction is the "*Technological clusters in microelectronics Corallia - second phase*", which aims to reinforce growth and competitiveness in business sectors where Greece can attain a competitive advantage, through the establishment of Innovation Clusters.[18] Based on this definition and the interviews conducted Corallia is not really a cluster, in the strict sense of the term.

3   EVIDENCE AVAILABLE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF INNOVATION MEASURES CO-FINANCED BY ERDF

In the current programming period it is very difficult to assess the impact of the ERDF for two reasons:

1. *Very few support measures have started*; hence it is too early to assess their impact. Absorption is so low that it is hardly possible to assess performance. The share on total community funds on 30 September 2009 (reference date) amounted to 6,9% in terms of allocations to selected operations and 1,5% declared payments. The ERDF shows a higher degree of activation, compared to ESF and Cohesion Fund. This is mainly due to the relatively better progress of the OP "Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship" (allocations to selected schemes and declared payments are respectively 12,4% and 5,4% of community funds) and the Regional OPs financed by ERDF. The latter have ,however, proceeded more in terms of allocations to selected operations (13,4%) than of actual payments (2,1%)[19].

2. There is very limited evidence even for the measures, which are replicating past incentives. There have been virtually no programme evaluations to support decisions for new initiatives and/or amendments-improvements of existing measures. Annex E, an extract from the joint Erawatch/Trendchart database, shows that few measures have used ex ante evaluations[20], with no performance indicators and only one has an ex post evaluation, which is however not publicly available[21]. Only three studies were commissioned on Liaison Offices, the Venture Capital Market and R&D Prioritisation. Of the three only the latter has been used, via a systematic consultation process, for the

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[18] http://www.corallia.org/en/about-corallia/vision-a-values.html

[19] Data as of June 2010

[20] Even these ex ante evaluations are indications that the measures were included in the overall ex ante evaluation of the Second CSF; however the total ex ante evaluation has never focused on RTDI and this is why the database has nowhere any *"indicators specified"* (the Annex is compiled from the database http://proinno.intrasoft.be/index.cfm?fuseaction=wiw.measures&page=list&CO=7)

[21] Could not be retrieved in the EW database, in the GSRT and by the author of the EW Report for Greece

priorities of the Cooperation Programme. Certain internal assessments are mentioned but are not publicly available. The press occasionally reports on programmes and alleged good practices, but the information is not evidence based, and hence not used for this report.

As a consequence impacts are studied, based on:

1. The expectations expressed in the main policy documents. Critical remarks are supported by inputs from the EU Policy Mix Study, the Trendchart and Erawatch reports and the DG Regio-sponsored Strategic Evaluation of RTDI (2006). An OECD Review of Greece's Innovation Policy, which started in 2007, has is not been completed (reactions of the national government to the first draft submitted by the OECD are pending) and thus is not officially available.

2. Interviews with national policy makers, who identify policy improvements and remaining weaknesses and express their views on the potential impact of the new programme. Findings are mainly based on internal discussions and personal views.

3. Assessments of measures adopted in Greece, which have been systematically evaluated in other countries.

Impacts of the ICT and entrepreneurship measures are very indirect and as a general rule reported to benefit the traditional sectors and not influence innovation directly.

The most interesting impacts of the programmes are those that support RTDI directly. One important issue is that the current programmes may operate more effectively, because of better documentation and selection processes, compared to the past.

The complicated interaction between national and regional funding and the common calls makes it difficult in many cases to distinguish between achievements under the convergence and competitiveness objectives. The most relevant calls, i.e. the Spin-off and Spin-out programme, the Business-Academia Cooperation programme and the business R&D cooperation support are addressed to all regions. These calls are tailored to promote innovation and although there is no explicit evidence of their anticipated impact, certain observations, common to all types of regions, are important. For them the following observations are important:

1. *Anticipated impact of the spin off-spin out measure:* This measure is a modification of a two-phase measure implemented under the previous CSF. Interviewees report that a rapid internal assessment[22] of the previous measure seemed quite beneficial for the economy but needed higher support rates. As the new State Aid regulation allows for higher impact now, the modifications adopted have been favourable to companies: support rates go up

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[22] The assessment could not be made available it may be an unofficial document but GSRT employees refer to it for the continuation of the measure.

to 70%, there is a significant simplification of procedures and more companies are eligible. National policy makers believe that this measure will probably have the highest impact in this programming period and this makes sense. There has been a very positive response to the calls and 206 companies have already been approved (but no contracts signed). Even if only half of them are successful the impact on the economy will not be negligible. A drawback identified by interviewees is that the majority of applications envisage business in the national market and are not export-oriented. There is also one additional problem: applications and selection concentrate on the Phasing In regions, which do not have sufficient funds, whereas applications from the convergence regions are very limited (grants were 130 in phasing out and 18 in phasing in regions, compared to 48 in convergence regions). The high response rate indicated a need to increase the budget for the competitiveness regions from the national budget, but funds are not available because of the macroeconomic austerity programme.

2. *The anticipated impact of Innovation Vouchers:* This became a very popular measure as soon as it was announced by the authorities. It is a completely new one and one of the first to start in this programming period. Although international experiences with innovation vouchers are positive and hence one would expect positive impacts in Greece as well, interviewees in the country express their concerns on the way the measure is organised. The very small numbers of innovation vouchers are expected to improve productivity and competitiveness in 50% of the cases, based on foreign evaluations, because they are very simple, involving no bureaucracy, hence attract companies which are usually not supported through other incentives. In Greece the model differs from the one evaluated in the other countries: companies receive higher funds than in most other countries but have higher reporting and bureaucratic obligations. This has not attracted as many companies as expected and a large number of the proposals received has been judged low quality and lacking in precision.

3. *Impact of the Cooperation Programme:* Cooperation of business and academia has been the flagship of the previous programming period. The current design has improved by narrowing down the focus on specific priorities and by emulating experiences from the procedures used by the EU FP7: shorter negotiation processes with successful applicants, longer periods to complete projects and concrete milestones. The programme has been broken down into small scale (up to one million) and large scale projects (1-3 million). The first call has been launched, 620 proposals were received and 121 (of which 8 large ones) were selected. There is no evidence to assess the impact of the Cooperation Programme. There is no evaluation available for its predecessor and there were several reservations concerning the relevance of the projects for the business sector. It is often viewed as a cooperation programme, which in reality has only a positive impact on the research capabilities of the country. Interviewees suggest that this has been mainly driven

by researchers, who often convince companies to cooperate not in order to resolve their internal problems and challenges but only in order to get the funds or the label. The small number of large projects selected this time may also imply limited impact on the economy.

4. *Impact of the Support of groups of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) for RTD*: This is also a new measure, based on a combined model of the FP Craft and Collaborative research programmes. It aims at supporting groups of SMEs with the same problems to subcontract the solution to a research organisation (which can also be an R&D-oriented company). This is an important idea; it has worked in other environments and responds to the challenge identified by other studies to promote collaborative research of SMEs. However, as there has been no prior experience, no studies and the applications have not been evaluated yet no reliable impact assessment can be made.

5. *Supporting companies*, which are either new or have never received any support funding in the past to undertake R&D. This is a modification of an old R&D grant to new companies. The previous measure, which has existed for a long time, has not been evaluated.

3.1 ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER THE CONVERGENCE OBJECTIVE

The Phasing Out regions under the Convergence Objective are the main beneficiaries of all GSRT support schemes. They absorb all their regional funds and score top in the national quota. Attiki in particular gets the lion share, as it has the highest absorptive capacity. The ERDF funds allocated are insufficient to cover the demand (after the selection process). The highest impact is expected to come from the spin off/spin out measure with 130 new companies selected already. The Phasing Out regions are also the main beneficiaries of the Cooperation Programme, with 42% of total funds absorbed by Attica and 22% by Macedonia. These funds, as indicated above, are in danger of limiting their impact primarily on research rather than innovation. In terms of applications the SMEs support and Cooperative research support schemes also reflect three quarters of the applications from the phasing out regions.

The other Convergence regions perform better in the Cooperation Programme with approved proposals for cooperation (before negotiation and contract signature) absorbing 31,7% of the total. The higher shares are in energy, certain traditional sectors (textile, aquaculture) but also biotechnology and nanotechnology. Crete and Western Greece with large universities and capable research centres are the main beneficiaries.

Convergence regions perform less well in the spin off/spin out activities. Only 48 companies are supported and there are comparatively few new companies and business R&D grants, in the context of the common calls by the GSRT, combining national and regional grants. This is an indication that the impact will again be limited to R&D capabilities rather than the economy. But

they perform significantly better in the Cooperation Programme, and will most likely have positive impact on academic research and less so on the local economy. Applications in SME research and SME collaborative research amount to about 25% of total applications.

Concerning innovation friendly environment, the progress of both approved projects and allocations to selected operations linked to ICT is low. The approved projects are:

- The national scheme *"Improvement of everyday life through Information and Communication Technology 23 (200 million €)*

- The e-security action *"Aid to enterprises to make investments in e-security"24 (10,5 million €)*

- *"Issuance and Management of the e-Card for the Unified Fund of the Self-employed"25 (4,95 million €).*

The implementation of these three activities is expected to boost production and skills in the ICT sector and help to increase productivity through better and more rapid access to information. However, as no contracts have been signed yet there is no evidence of participation or regional breakdown, hence there is no real evidence on impact.

In the policy area of boosting applied research and product development, 36% of the total community fund has been committed, which is considered a significant progress.[26] Indicative actions at a satisfying stage of activation are:

- *"Reinforcement of Youth Entrepreneurship"* and *"Support to female entrepreneurship"* – with a budget of 24 million € and 16 million € respectively, continuing from the OP Competitiveness 2000-2006.[27]

- *"Technology Clusters in Microelectronics Corallia– second phase"*, a highly specialised measure, funded with 33 million € for the period 2008-13 (co-funded by the ROPs) also a continuation from the previous national O.P. In 2008, Corallia implemented the establishment of the Microelectronics Innovation Centre in Athens and the design and implementation of the "Career Days".[28] The figures have tripled since the launch of the

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[23] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=884 , European Commission, INNO-Policy TrendChart – Innovation Policy Progress Report Greece 2009

[24] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=916

[25] http://www.ktpae.gr/declaration_more.php?decl_id=184, Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, General Secretariat for Investments and Development, National Strategic Report NSRF 2007-2013, Athens, December 2009, p.62

[26] National Strategic Report NSRF 2007-2013, Executive Summary, p.4-5

[27] PRO INNO - Europe: INNO-Policy Trendchart: Greece – Trendchart Support measures result

[28] http://www.corallia.org/en/about-corallia/distinctions.html

programme: the number of participating businesses has risen from 13 to 34, total turnover of the business members from 23 million € to 60 million €, highly trained staff involved from 275 to almost 700 and the patents either granted or applied for from 13 to 45.[29]

Additional positive impacts on the research infrastructure can be expected from the regional schemes, which are allocated directly to the local research organisations. Such schemes are "*Enhancement of existing research and technological development infrastructures in the region of Ipiros*"[30] under the ROP "Thessalia – Sterea Ellada – Ipiros", "Aid to research infrastructures in acclaimed research bodies and research centres in Peloponnesus region" and "*Infrastructures of Technology, Innovation and Research Transfer and Dissemination Bodies*" under the ROP "Western Greece – Peloponnesus – Ionian Islands"[31] and "*Education Infrastructures in the Region East Macedonia – Thrace*" within the ROP "Central Macedonia – Western Macedonia – Eastern Macedonia & Thrace"[32].

3.2 ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER THE COMPETITIVENESS OBJECTIVE

Overall Sterea Ellas and the South Aegean, which are the regions eligible under the competitiveness objective, have limited ERDF funds available. They demonstrate very limited participation in the Spin-Off/Spin Out programme (37 approved proposals as yet in total), which is the programme that is expected to have the highest impact. They will benefit more from the *Cooperation Programme*, but this is likely to impact research capabilities more than economic activity. Their applications in the SME research and Collaborative SME research programmes are marginal with 0,6 and 1,3 million Euros respectively.

Another indicative action under this Objective is "*Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services*". The aim of the scheme is to support small and micro enterprises – especially those operating in the less developed regions of the country – by providing direct capital funding in order to increase their competitiveness.[33] They are unlikely to include innovative companies. It is not possible to assess the impact of activities.

The two regions have a very particular structure, Sterea Ellas benefits from commuters from the neighbouring capital city and the South Aegean owes its economic development primarily to

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[29] Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, Operational Programme Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship, Good Practices

[30] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=582, http://www.peproe.gr/index_pep.html

[31] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=466, http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=631

[32] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=570

[33] Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Economy, Competitiveness and Shipping, General Secretariat for Investments and Development, National Strategic Report NSRF 2007-2013, Athens, December 2009, p.62

tourism. The limited funds and structure of the economy make it quite difficult to expect very significant impacts from the ERDF intervention.

4 CONCLUSION: MAIN CHALLENGES FACED BY COHESION POLICY PROGRAMMES

Greece is now composed of three types of regions (phasing in, phasing out and convergence) with most innovation concentrated in the phasing out regions. The mobilization of the business sector, which has always been reported as a policy priority, is a main challenge. However no visible progress was achieved: companies do not invest in research and innovation is limited. Public incentives could not trigger a cultural change in that respect.

The more obvious challenge is to speed up the procedure. Measures that are replicating past calls progress faster than others. Yet, calls started practically only in 2009 and most of them have not yet gone past the selection process, let alone signature of contracts.

However, the major challenges go well beyond operations and touch upon strategic and governance issues. Despite the economic growth of the pre-crisis decade and increasing support instruments Greece remains caught up in paradoxes and vicious circles, which constitute interwoven challenges that need to be addressed:

- *Moving from academic performance to business innovation*: More RTDI funding has contributed to better academic performance but has not improved trust, hence business expectations are unfavourable and there are only few, unlinked investments in new technologies. Past investments could not trigger restructuring towards the knowledge economy; the most important challenge is to mobilise medium and high tech investments and help new companies grow and export.

- *Improving governance*: research funding and S&T policy design have improved over time. However, innovation governance remains deficient: more emphasis is still given to research compared to innovation, policy implementation does not meet the expectations of policy papers and design, there is no evaluation culture, which can help redesign policies and adapt them to changing circumstances. Organisational changes have a *fire extinction* character, organisations often interact ineffectively and there is no effort to redesign the whole system.

- *Improving regional policy skills*: Policy skills in the regions are inadequate. In a chicken and egg situation the central government intervenes to implement calls for the regions because they are unable to do it themselves, whereas the more the central government implements regional schemes, the less opportunity regional policy makers have to be exposed to learning;

- *Decision on the strategic distribution of funds*: Demand for RTDI support comes mainly from the transition regions (phasing in and phasing out), and ERDF funds are insufficient to cover it, while there are no national funds available to make up for the gap. Funds in the convergence regions are more profuse than qualitative demand for RTDI support. The design of the five Regional Operational Programmes aimed precisely at giving the opportunity to redistribute funds at the end of the period within the geographical region. Phasing In and Phasing Out regions are likely to benefit from this and give the country the opportunity to absorb all resources and comply with the requirements of the Stability and Development Plan. This is a (understandable at this stage) strategic decision at the cost of the convergence regions.

A more pro-active criticism concerning the design and role of the ERDF coincides with the general criticism of the Greek innovation policy, since practically all activities are co-financed by the ERDF: The whole programme has a very static approach. The largest set of measures announced as yet are replications (with marginal modifications), although it is clear that it could not change the basic characteristics of the Greek production process. While in rhetoric terms all governments and administrations speak of the need to adopt a knowledge-economy model, in reality support schemes remain scattered and fragmented, thinly distributing funds among a very large number of companies/individuals with dubious results. Both governance and policy carry the blame for that:

1. *Governance* is improving in terms of policy design in the sense that modifications in visible problems are adopted and lessons from other member states and the EU are used to improve the measures supporting RTDI. However, the whole programme remains static. Policy implementation and delivery remain poor. Despite many efforts to create new structures and use skilled employees from special services, the capacity of RTDI policy makers/managers in the awarding authorities has not created a climate of confidence in the business sector. Speed, transparency and accountability, as well as simplification of procedures have not improved, at least not significantly and occasionally there are elements of retrogression. There is no evaluation culture in the country. The mandatory ex ante and real time evaluations imposed by the R&D are usually not a part of the programme and do not investigate the possibility of alternative schemes. Even project monitoring is formal rather than content-related. Projects are not assessed after their delivery and their results are hardly exploited. Other, in-depth evaluations are either totally absent, or late and not-transparent. With this approach it is practically impossible to adopt new, evidence-based policies.

2. In terms of *policy* there is no political courage to take risks and carry the pains of restructuring and increase the ambitions of the Greek innovation policy. Interviewees agreed that the political level was practically absent in the design of the current framework of RTDI support. Greek SMEs and very small enterprises depend on the thinly

spread support scheme. Such changes cannot be undertaken at the level of the administration without major strategy shift that has political backing. Changes which would focus on success (like measures promoting gazelles or developing clusters with considerable externalities) would probably deprive existing, less competitive SMEs, from survival resources in the short term but would trigger multiplication effects with a higher impact on the local economy.

A radically new option may indeed be too risky under the present macroeconomic circumstances, so no major changes are recommended within this programming period. But at least, if the prevailing model survives, it is imperative to link it to very strong performance indicators, otherwise another programming period will end without any significant contribution to a change of the national development model.

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INTERVIEWS

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Prof. Mihalis Dermitzakis, Former Vice-Rector of the University of Athens

Mr. Voyatzis, Corallia Cluster

Mr Nikos Maroulis, Logotech, External Consultant for GSRT priority setting

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ANNEX A – BACKGROUND DATA ON EU COHESION POLICY SUPPORT TO INNOVATION

The data on the ERDF resources allocated cover the FOI codes defined as being relevant for support of RTDI, or, more precisely, those that cover the bulk of resources devoted to innovation (see annex B for the list of codes). Experts should assess the appropriateness of this common definition and, if necessary, adjust the coverage to the national case in consultation with the core team. Note: experts should complete the final column only in respect of the National and Regional programmes totals and not for each regional programme.

Table 1 – Total ERDF resources allocated per programme (2007-2013)

Programmes	Total ERDF resources for innovation	Innovation support as % of total ERDF	Main initiatives* being undertaken or implemented
National/Multi-regional programme			------
Regional programmes			------
Thessalia - Sterea Ellada - Ipiros	206.716.060	4,3%	I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs, 761.227 € I innovate 2009 – Enterprises, 1.141.840 € Enhancement of existing research and technological development infrastructures in the region of Ipiros, € 2,000,000[34] Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services, in the context of the ROP 'Thessalia - Sterea Ellada – Ipiros'[35]
Crete and the Aegean Islands	37.050.000	4,3%	I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs, 80.982 € I innovate 2009 – New Enterprises, 121.472 € Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services, in the context of the ROP 'Crete and Aegean islands'[36]
Total Competitiveness Obj.	243.766.060	12,3%	To be completed by expert
Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship	633.570.000	49,1%	I save, 2009-11, (national), 100.000.000 € Creation – support to new innovative enterprises, notably highly knowledge intensive, 2009-11, (national), 25.000.000 €

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[34] The measure concerns only the region of Ipiros, which falls under the Convergence Objective, it is implemented though within the framework of the ROP "Thessalia – Sterea Ellada – Ipiros", which falls under the Competitiveness Objective, as Thessalia is a phasing–in region.

[35] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=479

[36] http://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/ProclamationsFS.aspx?item=477

			Reinforcement of Youth Entrepreneurship, 2001-13, (national), 24.000.000 € Technological clusters in microelectronics Corallia - second phase, 2008-13, (national), 33.000.000 € Innovation vouchers for SMEs, 2009-15, (national), 8.400.000 € Support to female entrepreneurship, 2001-13, (national), 16.000.000 € I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs, 5.717.301 € I innovate 2009 – Enterprises, 8.575.951€ Support of groups of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) for Research & Technology Development activities, € 23.730.000 Support of start-ups for Research & Technology Development activities, € 11.280.000
Digital Convergence	729.000.000	84,8%	Issuance and Management of the Insurance e-Card for the Unified Fund of the Self-employed, € 4.950.000 Improvement of everyday life through Information and Communication Technology, € 200.000.000 Aid to enterprises to make investments in e-security, € 10.500.000
Technical assistance	--------	--------	
Improvement of Accessibility	32.285.000	0,9%	Upgrade and development of public rail transportation network, € 89.000.000, Region of Attica Actions improving the management of the means of public transport as well as the safety and environmental management of transportation, € 10,000,000
Environment and Sustainable Development	--------	--------	
Attica	552.190.000	22,6%	I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs, 890.798 € I innovate 2009 –Enterprises, 1.336.196€ Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism - Commerce and Services, in the context of the ROP 'Attica'[37]
Western Greece - Peloponnesus - Ionian Islands	41.490.000	4,5%	Aid to research infrastructures in acclaimed research bodies and research centres in Peloponnesus region, € 15.798.936 Infrastructures of Technology, Innovation and Research Transfer and Dissemination Bodies, € 5.449.736 Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism - Commerce and Services, in the context of the ROP 'Western Greece – Peloponnesus – Ionian islands'[38]

Task 1: Policy Paper on Innovation

Central Macedonia - Western Macedonia - Eastern Macedonia & Thrace	487.640.000	18,2%	I innovate 2009 – New Entrepreneurs, 549.693 € I innovate 2009 – Enterprises, 824.540 € Support of Small and Micro enterprises, active in the fields of Manufacturing – Tourism – Commerce and Services, in the context of the ROP 'Macedonia-Thrace'[39] Education infrastructures in the Region of East Macedonia – Thrace, 40.000.000 €
Total Convergence Obj.	2.476.175.000	17,9%	To be completed by experts
Total country	2.719.941.060	17,2%	

* The term initiatives should be understood in a wide sense covering measures, projects, actions and so on co-financed by the ERDF. Among these, experts should identify the main kinds of intervention.
Source: core team on EC data.

As in the case of Table 1, experts may suggest a wider or narrower coverage of innovation in Table 2 than that defined here, which would imply adding or subtracting particular FOI codes. In this case, experts should consult the core team to explain their reasons for so doing.

Table 2 – ERDF contribution to innovation by policy area (2007–2013)

a – Convergence Objective

Policy area	Categorisation of expenditure (corresponding FOI codes)	Total ERFD	%	
			Regional share	National share
Innovation friendly environment	05 11 12 13 14 15 74	172.380.000 108.065.000 58.540.000 680.650.000 179.130.000 229.750.000 0	43,40 37,00 43,63 41,36 41,55 40,94 0	56,60 63,00 56,37 58,64 58,45 59,06 0
Knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters	02 03 04	77.815.000 77.915.000 79.920.000	87,35 77,92 67,59	12,65 22,08 32,41
Boosting applied research and product development	01 06 07 09	33.800.000 37.165.000 206.175.000 534.870.000	55,62 22,13 66,32 38,82	44,38 77,87 33,68 61,18

Source: core team on EC data.

b – Competitiveness and Employment Objective

Policy area	Categorisation of expenditure (corresponding FOI codes)	Total ERFD	%	
			Regional share	National share
Innovation friendly environment	05 11 12 13 14 15 74	9.610.000 7.993.200 3.150.000 46.550.000 14.476.960 17.545.900 0	89,07 47,46 100,00 83,14 70,30 75,49 0	10,93 52,54 0,00 16,86 29,70 24,51 0
Knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters	02 03 04	28.150.000 12.450.000 11.060.000	1,24 19,76 72,88	98,76 80,24 27,12
Boosting applied research and product development	01 06 07 09	4.100.000 4.060.000 13.000.000 71.620.000	51,22 100,00 84,62 87,78	48,78 0,00 15,38 12,22

Source: core team on EC data.

ANNEX B – CLASSIFICATION OF INNOVATION POLICY AREAS, INSTRUMENTS AND BENEFICIARIES

Policy area	Short description
Innovation friendly environment	This category covers a range of actions which seek to improve the overall environment in which enterprises innovate, and notably three sub groups: • innovation financing (in terms of establishing financial engineering schemes, etc.); • regulatory improvements and innovative approaches to public services and procurement (this category could notably capture certain e-government investments related to provision of services to enterprises); • Developing human capital for the knowledge economy. This category will be limited to projects in higher education aimed at developing industry orientated courses and post-graduate courses; training of researchers in enterprises or research centres. The category also covers initiatives geared towards improving governance capacities for innovation and knowledge policies (e.g. specific technical assistance funding, support for regional foresight)
Knowledge transfer and support to innovation poles and clusters	Direct or indirect support for knowledge and technology transfer: • direct support: aid scheme for utilising technology-related services or for implementing technology transfer projects, notably environmentally friendly technologies and ITC; • indirect support: delivered through funding of infrastructure and services of technology parks, innovation centres, university liaison and transfer offices, etc. Direct or indirect support for creation of poles (involving public and non-profit organisations as well as enterprises) and clusters of companies • direct support: funding for enterprise level cluster activities, etc. • indirect support through funding for regrouping R&D infrastructure in poles, infrastructure for clusters, etc.
Boosting applied research and product development	Funding of "Pre-competitive development" and "Industrial research" projects and related infrastructure. Policy instruments include: • aid schemes for single beneficiary or groups of beneficiaries (including IPR protection and exploitation); • research infrastructures for non-profit/public organisations and higher

	education sector directly related to universities. Any direct or indirect support for the creation of innovative enterprises (spin-offs and start-ups)

Instruments	Short description
Infrastructures and facilities	Building and equipment for laboratories or facilities for university or research centres, Telecommunication infrastructures, Building and equipment for incubators and parks for innovative enterprises
Aid schemes	Grants and loans for RTDI projects Innovative finance (venture capital, equity finance, special bonds, etc.) for innovative enterprises
Education and training	Graduate and post-graduate University courses Training of researchers

Beneficiaries	Short description
Public sectors	Universities National research institutions and other national and local public bodies (innovation agencies, BIC, Chambers of Commerce, etc..) Public companies
Private sectors	Enterprises Private research centres
Others	NGOs
Networks	cooperation between research, universities and businesses cooperation between businesses (clusters of SMEs) other forms of cooperation among different actors

ANNEX C – CATEGORISATION OF EXPENDITURE TO BE USED FOR CALCULATING EU COHESION POLICY RESOURCES DEVOTED TO INNOVATION

FOI Code	Priority Theme
	Research and technological development (RTD), innovation and entrepreneurship
01	R&TD activities in research centres
02	R&TD infrastructure (including physical plant, instrumentation and high-speed computer networks

	linking research centres) and centres of competence in a specific technology
03	Technology transfer and improvement of cooperation networks between small businesses (SMEs), between these and other businesses and universities, postsecondary education establishments of all kinds, regional authorities, research centres and scientific and technological poles (scientific and technological parks, technopoles, etc.)
04	Assistance to R&TD, particularly in SMEs (including access to R&TD services in research centres)
05	Advanced support services for firms and groups of firms
06	Assistance to SMEs for the promotion of environmentally-friendly products and production processes (introduction of effective environment managing system, adoption and use of pollution prevention technologies, integration of clean technologies into firm production)
07	Investment in firms directly linked to research and innovation (innovative technologies, establishment of new firms by universities, existing R&TD centres and firms, etc.)
09	Other measures to stimulate research and innovation and entrepreneurship in SMEs
	Information society
11	Information and communication technologies (access, security, interoperability, risk-prevention, research, innovation, e-content, etc.)
12	Information and communication technologies (TEN-ICT)
13	Services and applications for the citizen (e-health, e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion, etc.)
14	Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking, etc.)
15	Other measures for improving access to and efficient use of ICT by SMEs
	Human capital
74	Developing human potential in the field of research and innovation, in particular through post-graduate studies and training of researchers, and networking activities between universities, research centres and businesses

ANNEX D – ARTICULATION OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RTDI BUDGETS AND DECISION MAKING IN THE LAST TWO PROGRAMMING PERIODS

	Budgetary resources	Policy design decisions
Central administration	High share in 2000-2006 Low share in 2007-2013	Decision on its own share Selection of priorities at national level that apply also at regional level
Regional administration	Low share in 2000-2006 Much higher share in 2007-2013	INDEPENDENT decision on the amount to allocate for RTDI Limited influence (dependence) on the schemes to prepare and fund in support of RTDI

ANNEX E – COLLECTIVE INFORMATION ON RTDI EVALUATIONS IN THE ERAWATCH/TRENDCHART DATABASE

DATA OWNER	Code	1.2 Title of measure	4.1 Ex-ante indicators	4.1 Were any indicators specified	4.2 Which type of evaluation if any has taken place		
					ex-ante	ongoing/mid-term	final/ex-post
Proinno	GR 1	Investment law (Support to private investment for the regional development of the country)	Yes		YES	YES	NO
Erawatch	GR 6	Demonstration projects Programme - PEPER	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Erawatch	GR 25	Open Gates	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Erawatch	GR 32	Bilateral Co-operations for Research and Technology	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Proinno	GR 36	New Economy Development Fund S.A. (TANEO S.A.)	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Proinno	GR 46	Reinforcement of Youth Entrepreneurship	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Proinno	GR 48	Support to female entrepreneurship	Yes		YES	YES	NO
Erawatch	GR 59	Training and transfer of know how for the start up of new business activities	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Erawatch	GR 60	Training of human resources of firms on technological and organisational modernisation	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Erawatch	GR 82	"Joint ventures for research and technological development in sectors of national priority"	No		YES	YES	YES
Proinno	GR 98	Enhancement of the Youth Entrepreneurship Desks	Yes		YES	NO	NO
Proinno	GR 100	I save	Yes		YES	NO	NO