Evaluation Network

05-06 October 2023, Albert Borschette Conference Centre, Brussels

DG REGIO – UNIT B2

Agenda – Thursday, 05/10

- 14:00 - Introduction: approval of the agenda and minutes of the last meeting
- 14:15 - Overall update ex-post evaluation and example of Ex-Post evaluation on Climate & Environment
- 15:00 - Coffee break
- 15:20 - Round table on 2014-2020 evaluation findings on cohesion policy
- 16:10 - 17:10 Evaluation Activities – experiences from MS
- 17:10 - 18:00 Innovative evaluation practices
- 18:00 - Networking and drinks

Overall update *ex post* evaluation

O'NEILL Dora, Unit B.2, DG REGIO

European Commission

Ex post state of play

Work Package	Tender	Award	Inception	First interim	Second interim	Third interim	Draft final
1 - Synthesis				n/a	n/a	n/a	Q3 2024
2 - Data study							
3 - Modelling	In progress: internal work						
4- RTDI				Delivered			
5 - ICT					Delivered		
6 - SMEs					Delivered		
7 - Green					Q4 2023		
8 - Transport					Delivered		
9- Social					Q4 2023		
10 – Institutional capacity & reform				Q4 2023			
11 - Interreg					Delivered		
12 - Crisis		In progress					
13 – Integrated terr. development				Delivered			

Case studies by Member State

Work Package	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	HR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE
WP4 - RTDI					1							1			1												
WP5 - ICT			2		1	1		1	2	2	1	3		1	2		1	1			4	1	2	1	2	1	1
WP6 - SMEs	1	1			2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2			1		1	1	1		2	2	1	1	2	1	
WP7 - Green	3	6	5	3	6	4	4	5	4	5	4	7	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	6	5	5	4	4	4	4
WP8 - Transport		4	7					3	2	2	1	2	1	1	2		5				10	1	4		2		
WP9 - Social			4		2	2			3	1	2	2		2	2		1				3	2	1				
WP11 - Interreg	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4

European Commission

Ex post seminars

Objectives of the seminars: verify initial findings and fill in emerging information gaps or blind spots

- 26/10 WP 8 Transport
- 15/11 WP 5 ICT
- 16/11 WP 6 SME
- 07/12 WP 11 Interreg
- 21/09 WP9 Social
- 07/12 WP 7 Green

Example of **Ex-Post Evaluation on WP5 ICT**

Mark Whittle, CSES

European Commission

Centre for
Strategy & Evaluation
Services

Ex post evaluation of Cohesion policy programmes 2014-2020 financed by ERDF and Cohesion Fund
Work Package 5: ICT REGIO ICT

Evaluation Network - Second Interim Report Meeting

October 5th, 2023

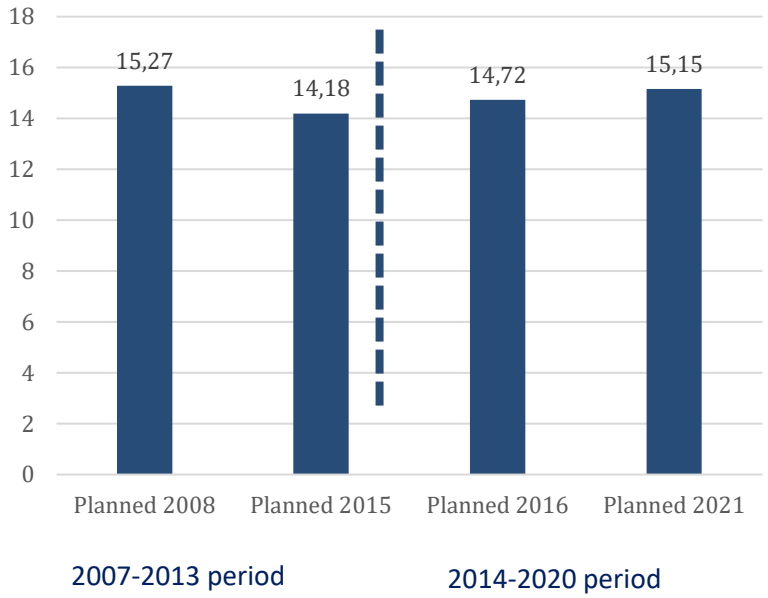
Study objectives

- Perform ex-post evaluation of ERDF support to ICT in 2007-13 & 2014-20.
- Assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact of ERDF ICT investments, coherence with other EU policies, relevance and EU added value.
- Identify lessons learned to inform future programming approaches:
  - Which policy instruments work best? In which contexts?
  - Optimal combinations of interventions using different policy mixes?
- Assess economic/ social impacts and identify specific contribution of ERDF using theory-based impact evaluation.

ERDF resources for ICT

- ERDF funding for ICT slightly increased between 2007-13 and 2014-20 (c.a 4% of Cohesion Policy funding for ICT in both periods).

EU amounts dedicated to ICT (EUR billion)



- 259 OPs planned funds for ICT in 2007-13, 160 in 2014-20
- Expenditure concentration: 50% of EU allocation in 11 OPs in 2007-13, in 8 OPs in 2014-20
- Poland, Spain and Italy are the main beneficiaries of funding, but Greece and France also invested considerably.

Based on categorisation data on the Cohesion Data Platform (2022 update)

Policy Instruments typology

ICT Infrastructure

- Content: ICT network infrastructures (roll-out of broadband networks, including backhaul/backbone, local loops), wifi access points in public spaces
- Number of operations: 1,363 (2007-13), 10,280 (2014-20)
- Total expenditure: 3 billion (2007-13), 6.6 billion (2014-20)
- Main beneficiaries: Enterprises/Telecom companies

E-business activities

- Content: Digitalisation of business operations (production, sales, support functions…), digital product and service development
- Number of operations: 3,190* (2007-13), 19,066 (2014-20)
- Total expenditure: 0.6 billion* (2007-13), 1.6 billion (2014-20)
- Main beneficiaries: enterprises (SMEs)

** Underestimated for 2007-13 due to CoE covered*

Policy Objectives

- Digital connectivity
- Digitalisation of business
- Digitalisation in the provision of public services

E-government

- Content: Digitalisation of public administrations, delivery of digital public services, open data platforms, support to the uptake of ICT, culture&tourism and GIS
- Number of operations: 12,540 (2007-13), 4,154 (2014-20)
- Total expenditure: 7.3 billion (2007-13), 6 billion (2014-20)
- Main beneficiaries: national, regional and local public administrations

Digital education & training

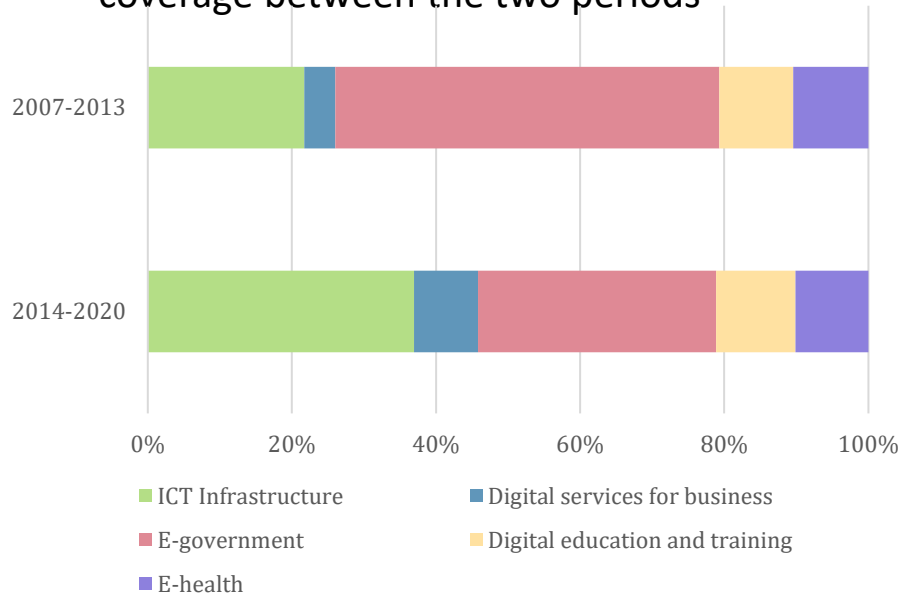
- Content: Provision of digital devices to schools, support for digital skills, distance learning platforms
- Number of operations: 18,043 (2007-13), 22,626 (2014-20)
- Total expenditure: 1.1 billion (2007-13), 2 billion (2014-20)
- Main beneficiaries: education and training institutions

E-health

- Content: Health information systems, remote patient management, telemedicine
- Number of operations: 953 (2007-13), 837 (2014-20)
- Total expenditure: 1.4 billion (2007-13), 1.8 billion (2014-20)
- Main beneficiaries: Hospitals and healthcare centers

Expenditure data by Policy Instrument

- Expenditure is concentrated in two Policy Instruments, digital connectivity through ICT infrastructures and e-govt.
- Infrastructure spending increased in 2014-2020
- Increased relative importance of digital services for business due to differences in data coverage between the two periods



Technology content of the Policy Instruments

Increasing technological maturity between periods.

Emerging technologies - 9% of expenditure in 2014-2020 (e.g. fibre-optic cables).

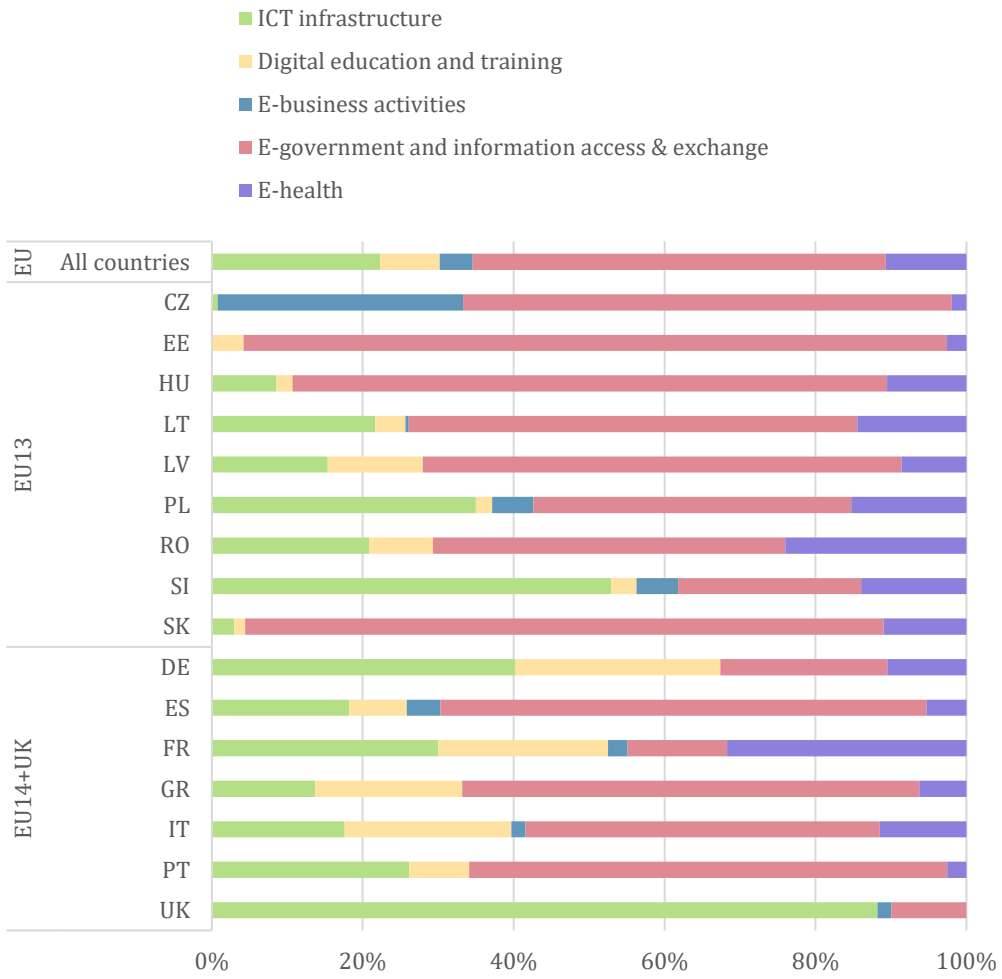
Other emerging technologies, e.g. AI, blockchain, and quantum computing included in other ex-posts (e.g. research infrastructures)

Form of finance

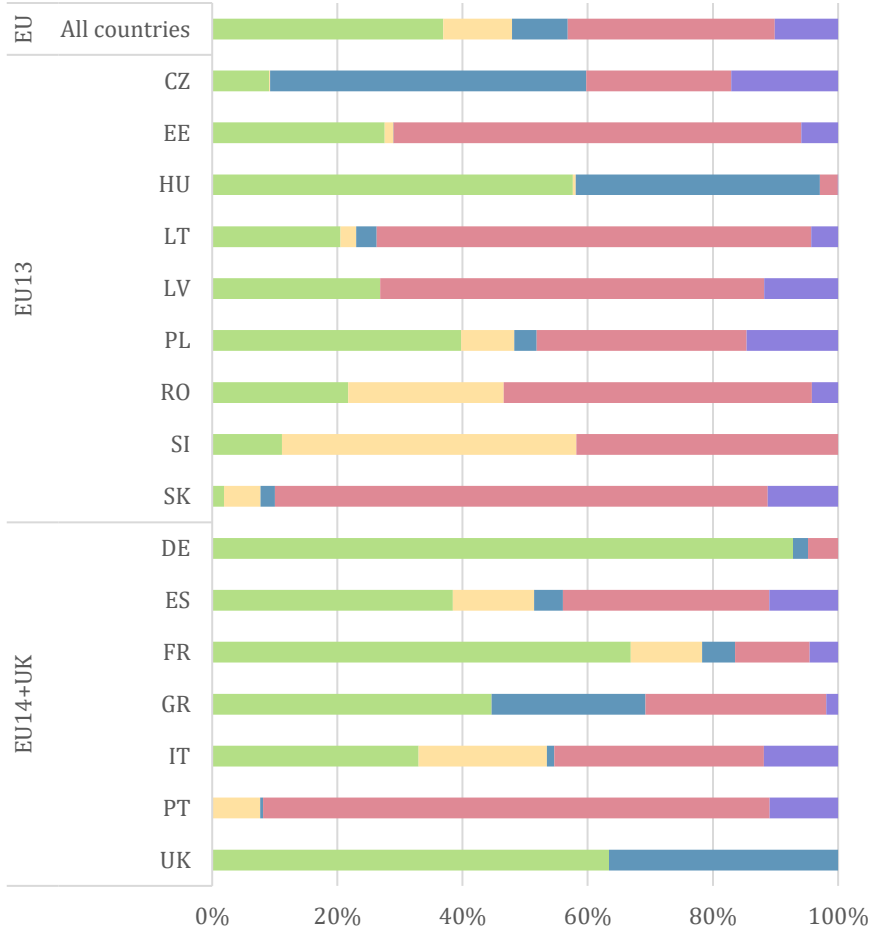
Grants (typically between 95% to 99% of expenditure in 2014-2020)

Co-financing rates varied across MS.

Policy mix



2007-13



2014-20

Task 3: case studies – overview

- 10 case studies (one merged - broadband – as similarities in Theory of Change "ToC").
- Policy Instrument typology (PI): (1) Digital connectivity covered broadband, WiFi access (2) e-government (3) e-health (4) digital education and training and (5) e-business services and applications.
- Case studies organised by PI but covering broader topics:
  - **Broadband/ ICT infrastructure** - pilot expanded covering 6 projects in 6 MS.
  - **e-government –** three cases 1) e-justice 2) public service delivery through integrated e-services and 3) open data.
  - **Digital education and training** – two cases, 1) Digital education in general sense 2) e-learning platforms.
  - **e-health –** focus on e-health information records.
  - **e-services and applications for businesses -** challenge in differentiating with SMEs.

Task 3 - case studies by MS

MS/ OPs and projects	MS 1	MS 2	MS 3	MS 4	MS5	MS 6
Case study themes						
Case study 1 – Digital connectivity (focusing on broadband and networking infrastructures)	EL	SE	PL	FR	IT	UK
Case study 2 - WiFi- Access Points in Cities	ES	EL	SK			
Case study 3 - e-government through the internal digitalisation of public administrations (focus on e-justice)	IT	IT	IT	CZ	CZ	CZ
Case study 4 - External digitalisation of public services (multi-sectoral approach, given many different public services benefit)	EE	SE	PL			
Case study 5 - Efficacy of centralised online portals improving accessibility of information for citizens and businesses	DE	LT	IT	PT		
Case study 6 - Development of services and applications for businesses	UK	HU	FI			
Case study 7 - Digital services and applications for digital education and training	ES	PL	SI			
Case study 8 - E-learning platforms (including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on reprogramming towards e-learning)	IT	FR	CZ	ES		
Case study 9 - Digital services and applications for e-health and social issues	LV	PL	RO			

Task 3: Case studies - methodology

- **Theory of Change approach.** Combination of **"top-down"** and **"bottom-up"** primary and secondary data gathering and analysis.
- Identification and testing of a ToC with analysis of **output-results chains** and **results-to-impact pathways.**
- **'Attribution'** – how far can changes observed be directly attributed to ERDF support to ICT, incl. role of **external factors?**
- **Unit of analysis** – varies across cases. 1) larger projects – the project level 2) umbrella projects and 3) smaller projects – either at project or operations level.

Research methods

- **Desk research** – documentation review. Review of OPs, previous evaluations, monitoring data, economic/ market studies and research papers.
- **Interviews -** project level and strategic. Interviewees vary by PI: Ministries, MAs, project officers, members of EU networks (BCOs), beneficiaries, industry assoc's, telco/ network operators, the judiciary, schools etc.

Task 3: Case studies – methodology (2)

Other considerations:

- **Monitoring data availability** - differentiating between outputs, results and impacts).
  - *ERDF results database, MA monitoring databases.*
- **Direct / indirect distinction in outcomes data.**
  - Direct - no. of broadband subscribers, no. of users of public WiFi.
  - Indirect - DESI connectivity data (e.g. broadband uptake).
  - Partially direct and indirect e.g. uptake data available some projects, but not others.
- **External factors' role in influencing outcomes and extent of contribution e.g.**
  - Degree of market failures (state aid rules/ white coverage areas);
  - Evolution in new technologies;
  - Contextual developments – shift in geographic coverage rural areas, level of uptake;
  - Policy developments at EU and MS level (Gigabit Society);
  - Market developments and change in investment drivers - public and private sectors/ telco's; Unexpected developments influencing implementation context e.g. COVID pandemic, high inflation, changes in socio-economic conditions, Ukraine war.

Digital connectivity 1 – Broadband (1)

- C.a. 38.6% of expenditure, most visible PI. Paved way for other ICT interventions to be supported across other PIs.
- Strong progress in developing broadband network and in addressing gaps in white coverage areas.
- Shift during 2007-20 towards higher-speed projects (>100Mbps) and fibre-optic cable technologies in 2014-20 period (Digital Agenda>>Gigabit Society).

Outcomes at outputs and results levels:

- Extensive network of 000's of km of fibre-optic cable built. >183ks km of new broadband cables laid in six projects in six MS alone.
- Good progress in extending geographic coverage, esp. in rural areas (digital divide). Estimated 11-12 million households benefiting in 2014-20.
- Uptake data partial at project level (absence of mon. data), so DESI connectivity data used as proxy.
- Changes over time in fixed broadband take-up need context (mobile access, 5G)
- Some MS, ERDF strongly promoted uptake (e.g. SE), in others, various challenges *e.g. IT – delays + alternatives available, EL/ PL ageing demographics.*

Digital connectivity 1 – Broadband (2)

Impacts on overcoming digital divide:

1. Major progress in overcoming urban/ rural divide in access to fixed broadband, largely as a result of ERDF interventions in rural areas.
2. Reduction in differences between MS in access to, and take-up of fixed broadband. These remain, but have diminished;
3. Demographic differences in take-up of broadband -some progress in getting older age groups to switch to broadband (role of pandemic).
4. Is the "new digital divide" driven by speed?

Socio-economic benefits

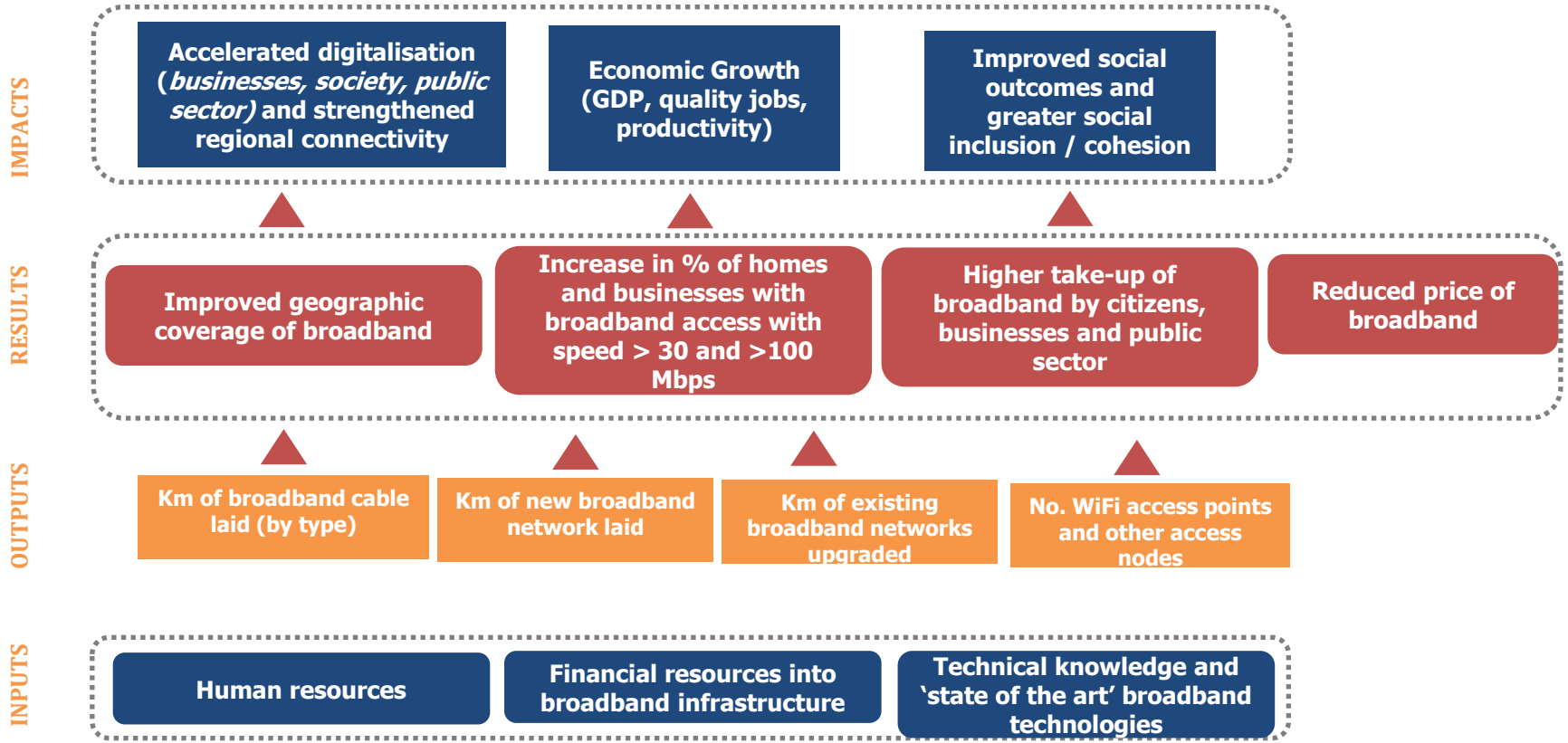
- **Positive impacts for citizens** – promotion of digital skills, fostering take-up of broadband and supporting social inclusion among disadvantaged groups & those less likely to use broadband previously.
- **Positive impacts for businesses –** easier to digitalise and network if connected to broadband, transition to cloud-based computing, efficiency savings in productivity.
- **Difficulties in quantifying economic benefits directly**. Secondary literature – positive correlation between broadband investments, growth, productivity and employment. Lack of econometric-based impact evaluations in many MS/ regions.

Digital connectivity 1 – Broadband (3)

Technological impacts:

- In 2007-13, wider variety of technologies deployed such as ADSL, DSL, vectoring etc. 2014-20 - fibre-optic tech's (e.g. FTTH, FTTB, FTTP) dominated.
- Some technologies can't deliver on Gigabit Society aims, requiring further investments (financial sustainability considerations).
- Others (e.g. fibre-optic) future-proofed as increased internet speeds through upgrades and extended lifetime to obsolescence (20 years+).
- Transition between periods - concentration of fibre-optic / Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband projects in 2014-20.
- **Policy and regulatory-driven changes:**
- Increased importance of broadband speed, not only coverage. From >30 Mbps to >100 Mbps and towards a Gigabit Society.
- Complexity of assessing achievements, give policy decision to support 1) fixed broadband and 2) white coverage areas (5G, other types of broadband).
- From a European Digital Agenda through to digital transition and the Gigabit Society context. Dovetailing with updating of National Broadband Plans.
- Changes in regulatory environment e.g. reform of GBER, state aid rules on broadband;

ERDF support to broadband – simplified ToC



e-government

- E-govt - substantial share of ICT expenditure (largest in 2007-13, close 2nd in 2014-20 after digital connectivity).

1. Online provision of public services.

Some progress towards following outcomes:

- Increased cost-efficiency / productivity of public service operators.
- Increased quality of, and access to integrated online public services, but limited data on uptake.
- Safeguarding access to public services for vulnerable populations.
  - *Evidence: OnDijon project - outreach and communication activities to support uptake of online public services, with activities focusing on groups such as the elderly.*
- Difficulties in agreeing on responsibilities between central/ local levels for implementation of some portals/ online services led to duplication of efforts.
- Intermunicipal cooperation led to online public services being successfully implemented (e.g. FR, PT), allowing for the pooling of resources and competences.
- Mobilising citizens at an early stage (e.g., in needs assessments) can be highly beneficial to digitalising the right services and doing this in a user-friendly way

Overall findings case studies (1)

- Progress towards achievement of objectives at PI level.
- Whilst some projects highly successful, evidence was mixed overall. Some projects only partially achieved their aims.
- However, others encountered delays, which hindered implementation and assessment of outcomes.
- Monitoring data on (direct) outcomes was often not available or only partially.
- Direct data (partially available) and proxy data to overcome data deficiencies.
- Easier to assess results than impacts. Often difficult to determine longer-term impacts resulting from successful project delivery.
- Impacts can be assessed qualitatively, but project level analysis may not give full picture and could generate fragmented impression of outcomes.
- To adequately assess economic effects, national impact evaluations would need to be carried out more frequently *(e.g. esp. for broadband when effects on GDP, employment effects and effects on productivity could be estimated).*

Overall findings - case studies (2)

Key achievements:

- ERDF supported state-of-the-art in use of new technologies *(broadband, e-learning platforms, integrated e-govt service provision).*
- Progress towards overcoming digital divide between rural and urban areas in access to fixed broadband. To some extent, closing of gap between MS/ regions.
- Strong progress in 2007-20, but DESI data found broadband uptake stagnated in some MS in 2020-22. *Role of external factors – broadband beyond fixed access, 5G, etc.*
- Promotion of uptake of ICT and digitalisation through…..
  - Integrated e-govt service provision to facilitate access to public services and improve connectedness of citizens with public administration.
  - Within enterprises, fostering digital transformation and ways of working with enhanced productivity tools.
  - Among citizens - easier access to digital connectivity, improved ICT infrastructures, services and applications, platforms…
- Disentangling ERDF's contribution not straight forward, but major contribution made
  - *e.g. attribution challenges, big picture trends, e.g. digital transition/ transformation, accelerated internet speeds global phenomenon, COVID pandemic driving adoption of networking tools like MS Teams, cloud computing etc.*

Overall findings - case studies (3)

Lessons learned:

- Delays need to be anticipated and reasons for these communicated.
- Updating of state aid rules can shorten timeframes to implementation.
- National regulatory environment needs to be supportive e.g. planning laws, ability to navigate fragmented land ownership for strategically impt ICT projects.
- Monitoring data on ICT interventions needs improving, with sufficient indicators by PI.
- Insufficient attention to need for coordination between PIs given successful implementation is interlinked e.g.:
  - Pre-conditions for uptake of broadband - strong basic and advanced digital skills, availability of digital services regionally and locally.
  - Good uptake of e-govt services requires effective communication and outreach, user-friendly design of interfaces / portals/ platforms and clear use cases/ efficiency savings for public sector and users.
  - Successful uptake of e-government services reliant on high-quality, decent-speed broadband access, and ease and affordability of such access to the internet, alongside communication activities to foster accelerated take-up by citizens and businesses.

Preliminary findings -relevance of ERDF support

ICT Needs

Similar ICT needs across the OPs: **connectivity, digitalization of public administration, digitalisation of business, digital skills**

Unchanged categories of needs between periods, but **targets became more ambitious**

Rationale of the policy mix

Improving **ICT network infrastructure coverage and quality** was the key **enabling conditions** to support a **digital transformation**

The decision about investing or not investing in ICT infrastructure was key in shaping the policy mix

Design of ICT support

The **European Digital Agenda** provided the overall strategic framework

In 2014-20, **national digital strategies** and **NGAs** were key for identifying priorities and instruments

State aid rules shaped focus and delivery modalities of broadband investments (white coverage focus)

Reprogramming

Affected the ICT initial allocations and distribution with the ICT expenditures

Mainly due to:

- **Implementation delays**, especially in large projects
- **Unexpected crises**
- **Low absorption rate** or **high demand** for specific instruments

Preliminary findings - efficiency (implementation delays)

Implementation delays linked to administrative complexity and contextual factors

Higher for broadband projects in 2007-2013
Higher for e-government projects in 2014-2020

Type of intervention	Barriers
All policy instruments	**2007-2013** Limited capacity and ICT relevant expertise both in the MAs and in the project beneficiaries. Lack of strategic focus and insufficient project maturity The economic crisis **2014-2020** COVID pandemic Technological change that require changes to project specifications. Increasing costs for ICT equipment and workers
ICT infrastructure	Compliance with State Aid regulations, various legal issues and disputes, complexity of the national procurement process, multi-level governance requiring the coordination between national, regional and local stakeholders.
e-government and e-health	Lack of adequate legal frameworks, complexity of the national procurement process, multi-level governance requiring agreement on protocols and standards.

Preliminary findings - effectiveness

Strategic Design

- National strategic frameworks and multi-level governance
- Policy mix design (fragmentation vs concentration of expenditure)
- Supply-driven investments, lack of interest from the private operators, affordability issues
- Continuity between the two programming periods

Technology

- Complementary investments (fast-internet availability as a precondition for other interventions)
- Technological obsolescence and future-proofing
- Maintenance and upgrade costs

Human Capital

- Digital literacy and skills
- Cultural factors (trust, resistance to change)

Preliminary findings - coherence

Internal

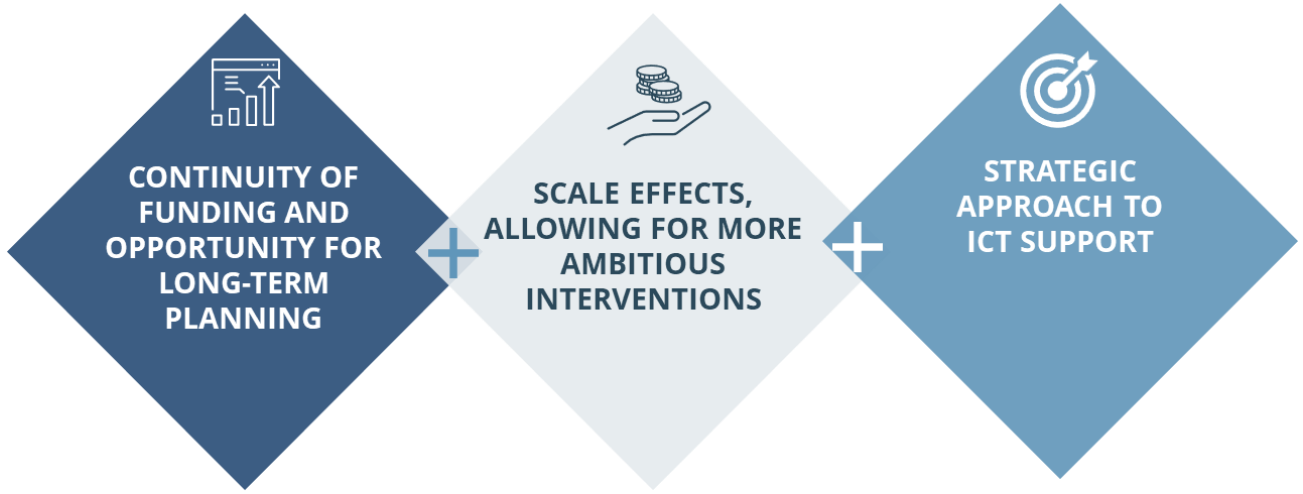
- Alignment with the ERDF ICT support and **digital strategies and national broadband plans**
- **Division of labour** between the national and the regional level to reduce overlaps and the proliferation of different standards and systems
- Linkages with **S3 strategies** worked in two ways: i) improving connectivity and digitalisation of the economy and society as key enabling conditions for achieving the objectives of the S3, ii) direct ICT support to businesses in priority sectors

External

- **With other ESI Funds**. Combination of ERDF/EARDF for broadband access in rural areas. ESF supports digital skills, synergies with ERDF not fully exploited.
- **With other EU programmes**. No evidence of explicit mechanisms to ensure synergies with other EU programmes (CEF, H2020).

Preliminary findings - EU added value

THREE MAIN SOURCES OF EU ADDED VALUE



In MA perception, EU added value is particularly high when ERDF is the only or the main source of funding available for ICT

Preliminary findings - policy relevant questions

Financial Sustainability

- ICT projects' sustainability is ensured by public budgets (MAs).
- 2007-13 - critical factors (e.g. cost of maintenance and technology upgrades, financial conditions of private operators, market context and evolution in market failures).
- 2014-20 – future-proofing connectivity investments, some measures could be continued without ERDF support (e.g. Wi-Fi, broadband networks once built).

Urban/Rural Digital Divide

- Not explicit objective of ERDF ICT, but white coverage state aid rules mean rural areas benefit. Contribution to enhancing geographic coverage, fostering uptake and promoting digital transformation.
- ERDF contributed towards full territorial coverage, including through the combination of ERDF and EARDF funds.
- Reduction in gaps between regions.
- e-government case studies - good balance achieved between projects to improve efficiency of central administration and minor administrative centers.

Round Table on 2014-2020 Impact Evaluation On Cohesion Policy

Viktoria Bolla, Team Leader, Unit B.2, DG REGIO
Philippe Monfort, Unit B.2, DG REGIO

European Commission

Assessing the impact of the 2014-2020 programmes at macroeconomic level

Brussels, 5 October 2023
Evaluation Network Meeting

Tillmann Heidelk, Philippe Monfort (REGIO B2)
Tryfonas Christou, Abián García Rodríguez, Nicholas Lazarou, and Simone Salotti (JRC Seville)

Regional and urban Policy

Motivations

- Analysis conducted in the context of the 2014-2020 ex-post evaluation.
- Assessing the impact at macroeconomic level of the 2014-2020 programmes on the EU-28 NUTS 2 regions.
- Data on policy interventions corresponds to **expenditure**.
- Simulations with a spatial general equilibrium model (RHOMOLO).

Motivations

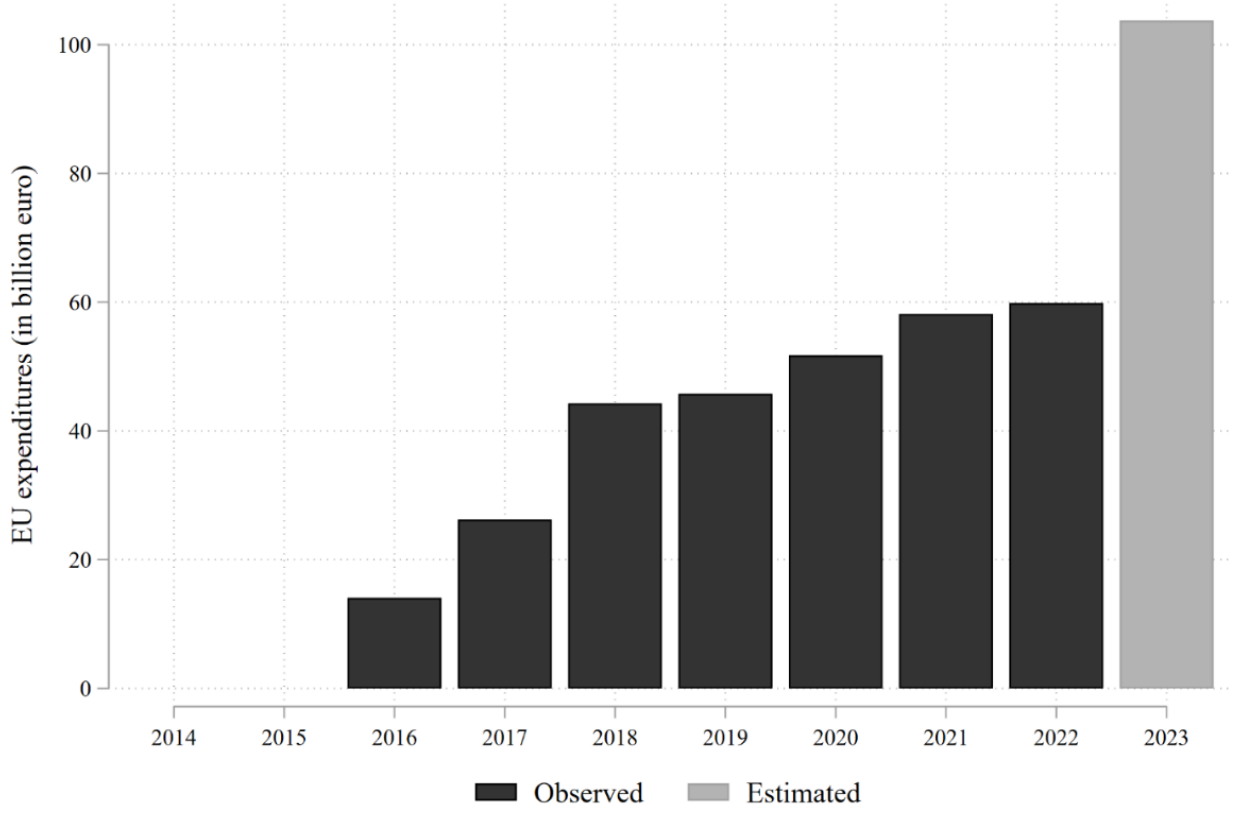
- Data on policy interventions corresponds to the **expenditure** up to end 2022.
- For 2023, the estimated expenditure = the difference between the allocation and the cumulated expenditure up to end 2022.
- This implies an assumed 100% absorption rate.
- Impact on key macroeconomic variables (GDP, employment, investment, …).

Allocation of funds across programmes

	Fund	EUR
Initial allocation	CF	61,455,291,486
	ERDF	199,733,761,176
	ESF	84,887,133,460
	YEI	8,950,645,385
	Sub-total	355,026,831,507
REACT-EU	ERDF	29,424,281,390
	ESF	19,361,713,312
	Sub-total	48,785,994,702
Total	Total	403,812,826,209

CP funding

Time profile of total expenditures (in billion euro)



Regional breakdown

In less developed Member States and regions, CP funding corresponds to a sizable policy injection.

Multiregional programmes are "regionalized" pro rata population.

Yearly average 2014-2023

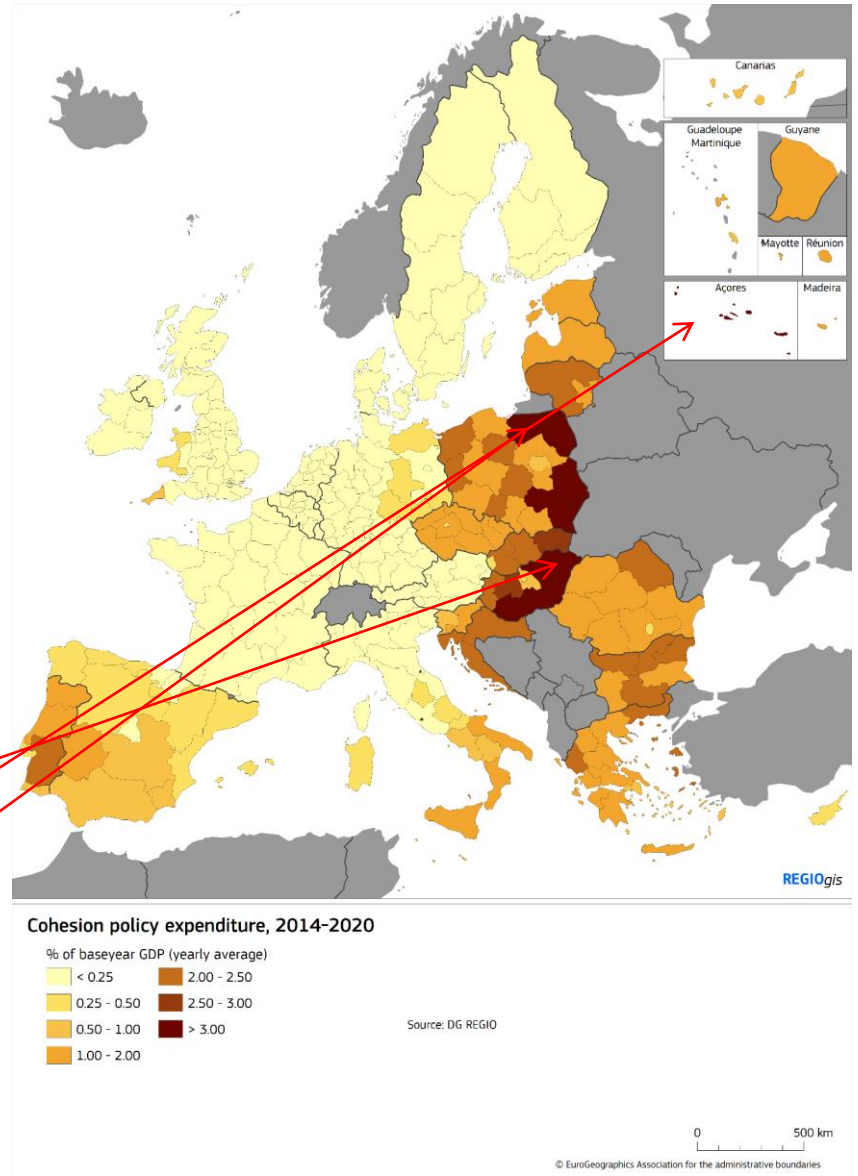
Croatia, 1.9%

Hungary: 1.7%

Região Autónoma dos Açores: 3.9%

Észak-Alföld: 3.6%

Warmińsko-Mazurskie: 3.1%



Regional breakdown

Cohesion funding per categories of regions

Regions	Share of pop (14-20) (%)	Share of funding (%)	Aid intensity
Less developed	27.2	62.4	297.3
Transition	12.7	12.2	124.6
More developed	60.2	25.4	54.6
EU-28	100	100	129.4

Sectoral breakdown

Based on the 123 categories of interventions, expenditure is grouped under broad model fields of interventions.

Thematic concentration of funding changes from MS/regions to the other.

PL: 35% in TRNSP

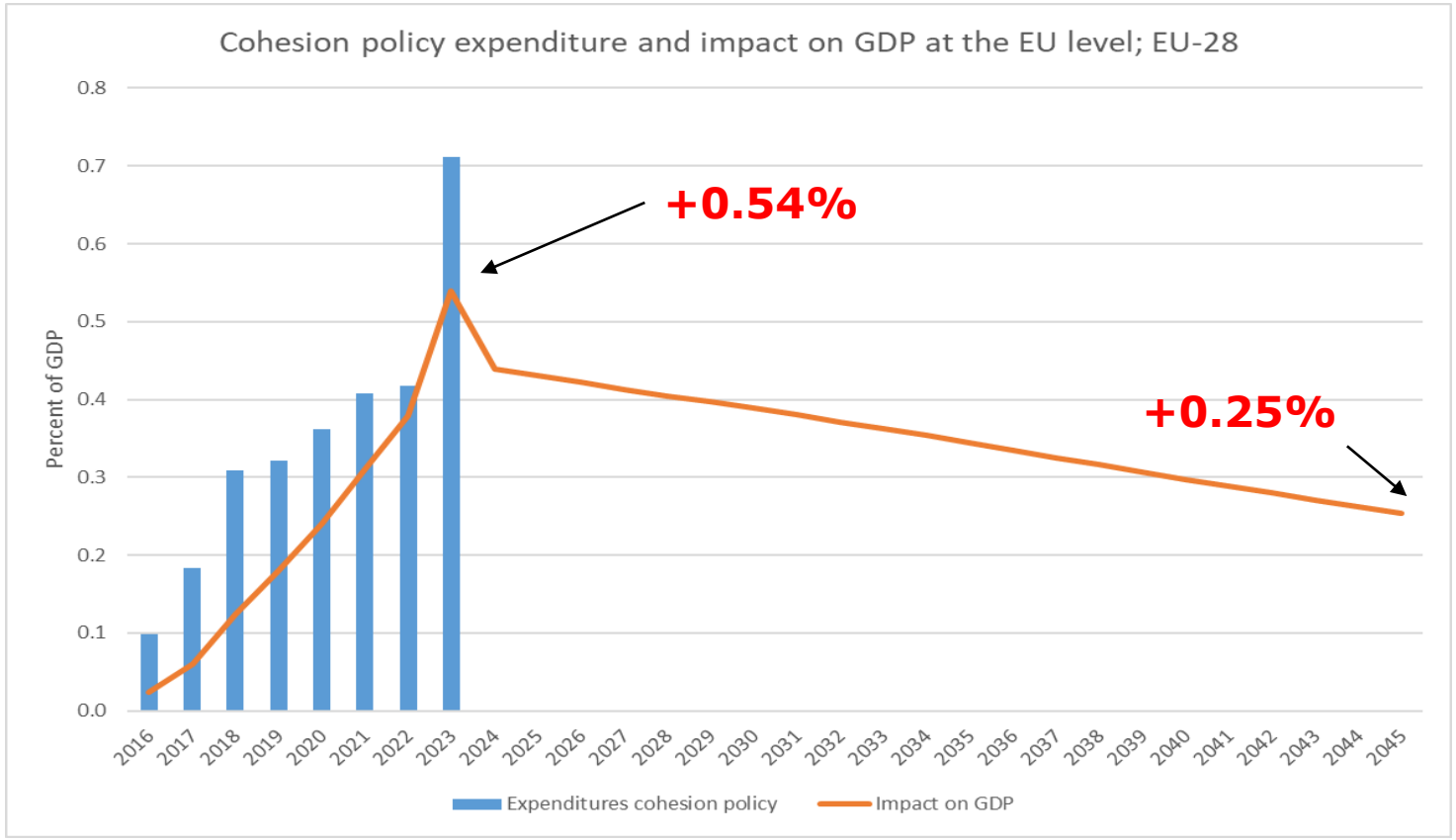
LT: 43% in INFR

NL: 0.4% in TRSNP and 8.3% in INFR, 37.3% in RTD and 42.6% in HC.

	RTD	AIS	TRNSP	INFR	HC	TA
AT	21.5	18.6	3.7	14.2	38.0	4.0
BE	19.1	11.5	3.9	14.6	47.9	3.0
BG	10.3	9.7	23.4	30.7	22.3	3.5
CY	7.8	15.1	12.6	34.0	27.7	2.7
CZ	14.1	4.2	26.5	35.4	16.0	3.7
DE	26.7	9.0	3.3	19.3	38.3	3.4
DK	36.0	16.7	1.9	4.9	36.3	4.1
EE	21.1	4.2	14.4	40.5	16.9	2.9
EL	7.2	26.5	14.2	25.3	23.8	3.0
ES	11.2	6.2	7.8	38.9	34.1	1.9
FI	32.2	20.2	2.6	6.2	35.2	3.5
FR	15.1	8.7	5.5	29.2	38.6	2.9
HR	9.2	14.9	14.1	35.5	22.6	3.8
HU	9.6	15.6	16.8	33.8	22.7	1.5
IE	5.9	1.9	0.7	35.5	54.1	1.8
IT	8.7	12.9	8.4	24.3	42.7	2.9
LT	16.3	3.5	15.3	43.3	18.5	3.1
LU	6.2	0.0	20.6	23.5	48.1	1.5
LV	15.4	4.6	26.3	36.1	15.4	2.2
MT	7.1	5.2	14.0	41.5	29.6	2.6
NL	37.3	7.0	0.4	8.3	42.6	4.3
PL	16.8	2.4	35.1	26.8	15.6	3.3
PT	16.8	16.4	7.0	23.5	33.7	2.6
RO	4.3	10.6	28.1	33.2	20.6	3.1
SE	25.4	11.4	4.8	8.8	45.9	3.7
SI	22.4	7.3	11.9	32.7	22.1	3.7
SK	9.6	5.2	26.2	33.6	21.3	4.0
UK	23.7	11.8	4.8	12.9	43.3	3.5
EU-28	13.8	9.2	17.3	28.9	27.8	3.0

Impact at EU level

Cohesion policy expenditure (% of EU GDP) and impact on EU GDP (% deviation from baseline)



Impact

Cohesion policy impact in selected years; EU-28.

	Year			
	2023	**2030**	**2040**	**2045**
GDP (% change)	0.54	0.39	0.30	0.25
GDP Multipliers	0.66	1.69	2.90	3.38
Employment (%)	0.84	0.32	0.26	0.23
Employment (thousands of people)	1,936.133	738.928	609.010	542.565

Impact at NUTS 2 level

Impact is large in main beneficiaries.

Impact 2023

Croatia: +6.4%

Lithuania: +3.8%

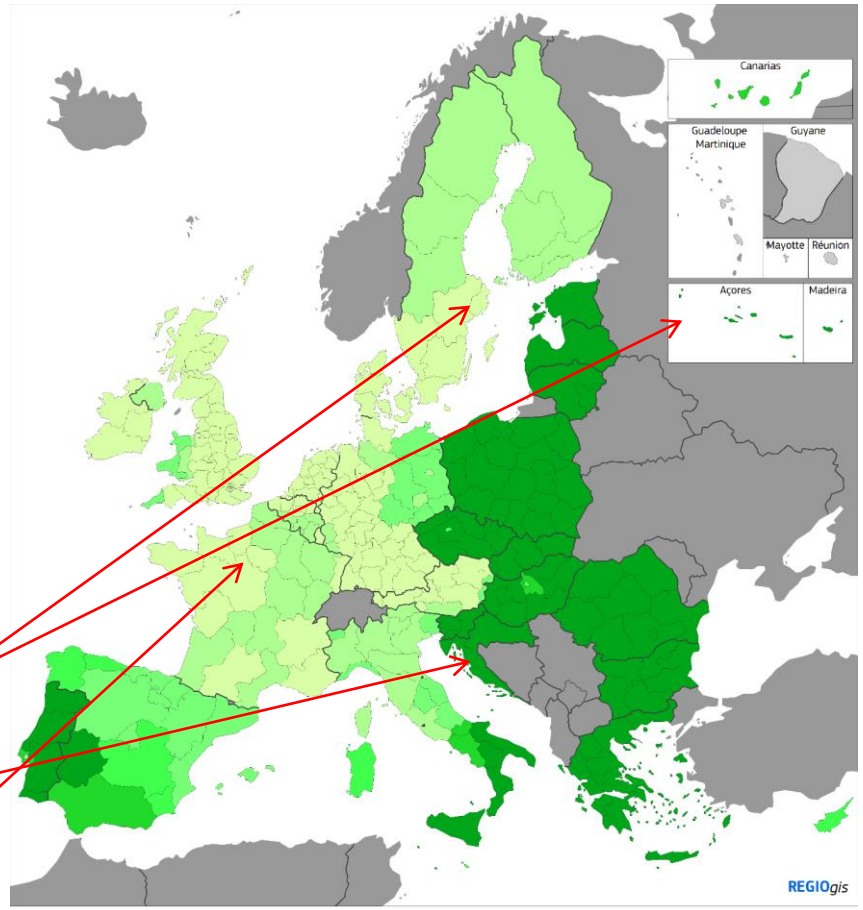
Slovakia: +3.6%

Região Autónoma dos Açores: +8.3%

Jadranska Hrvatska: + 6.4%

Stockholm: - 0.14%

Île-de-France: -0.13%



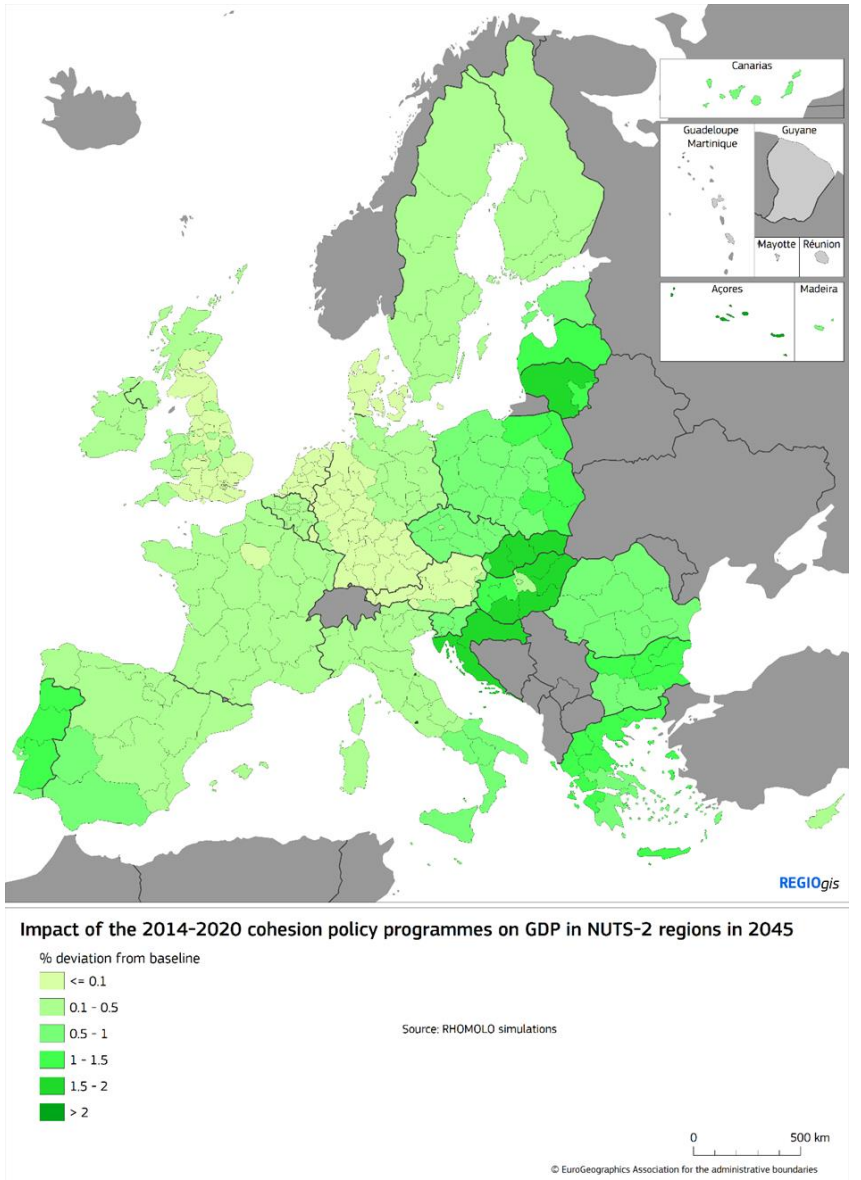
Impact at NUTS 2 level

But in the longer run, the impact is positive for all regions

Impact 2045

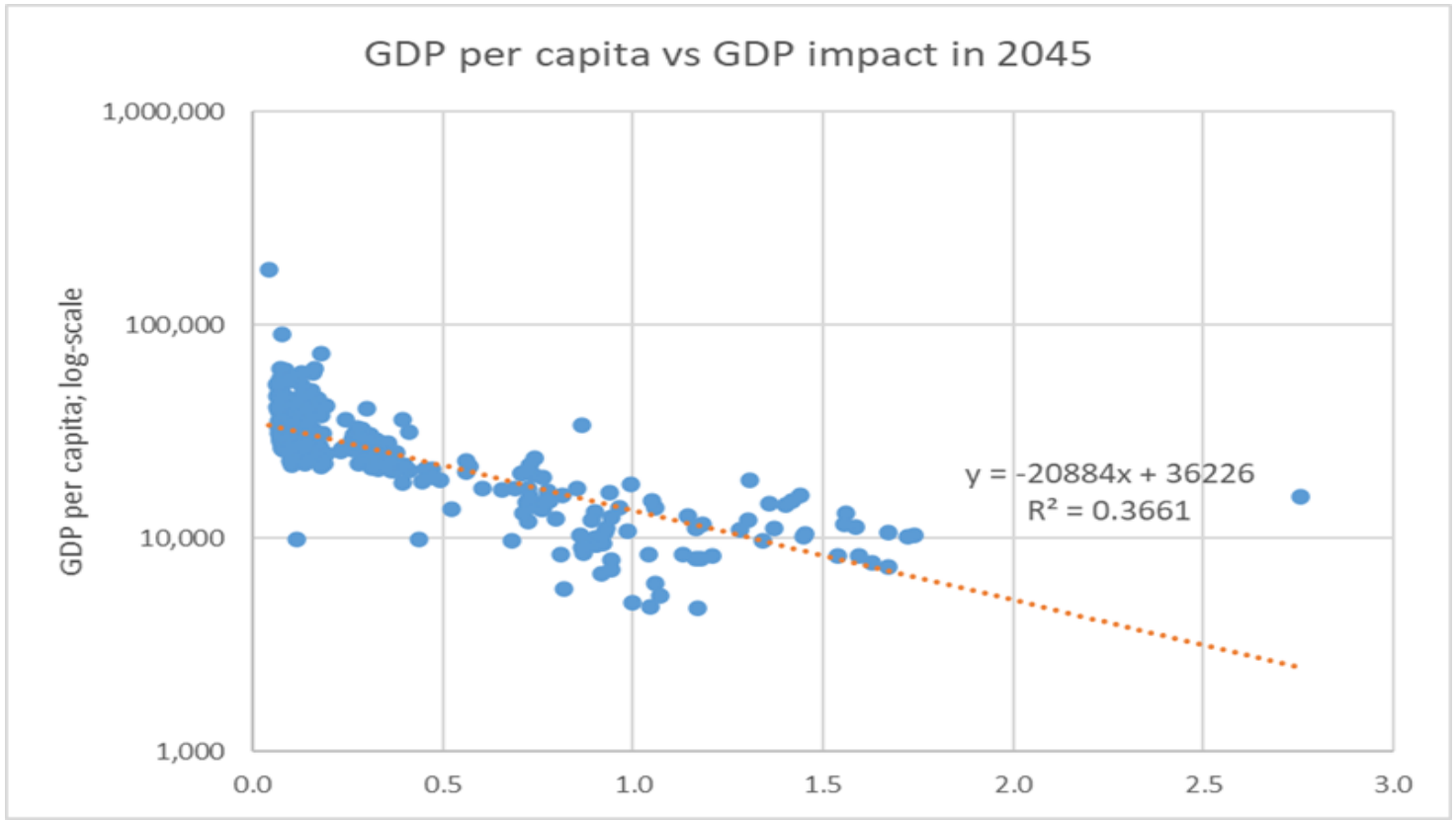
Stockholm : + 0.13%

Île-de-France: + 0.09%



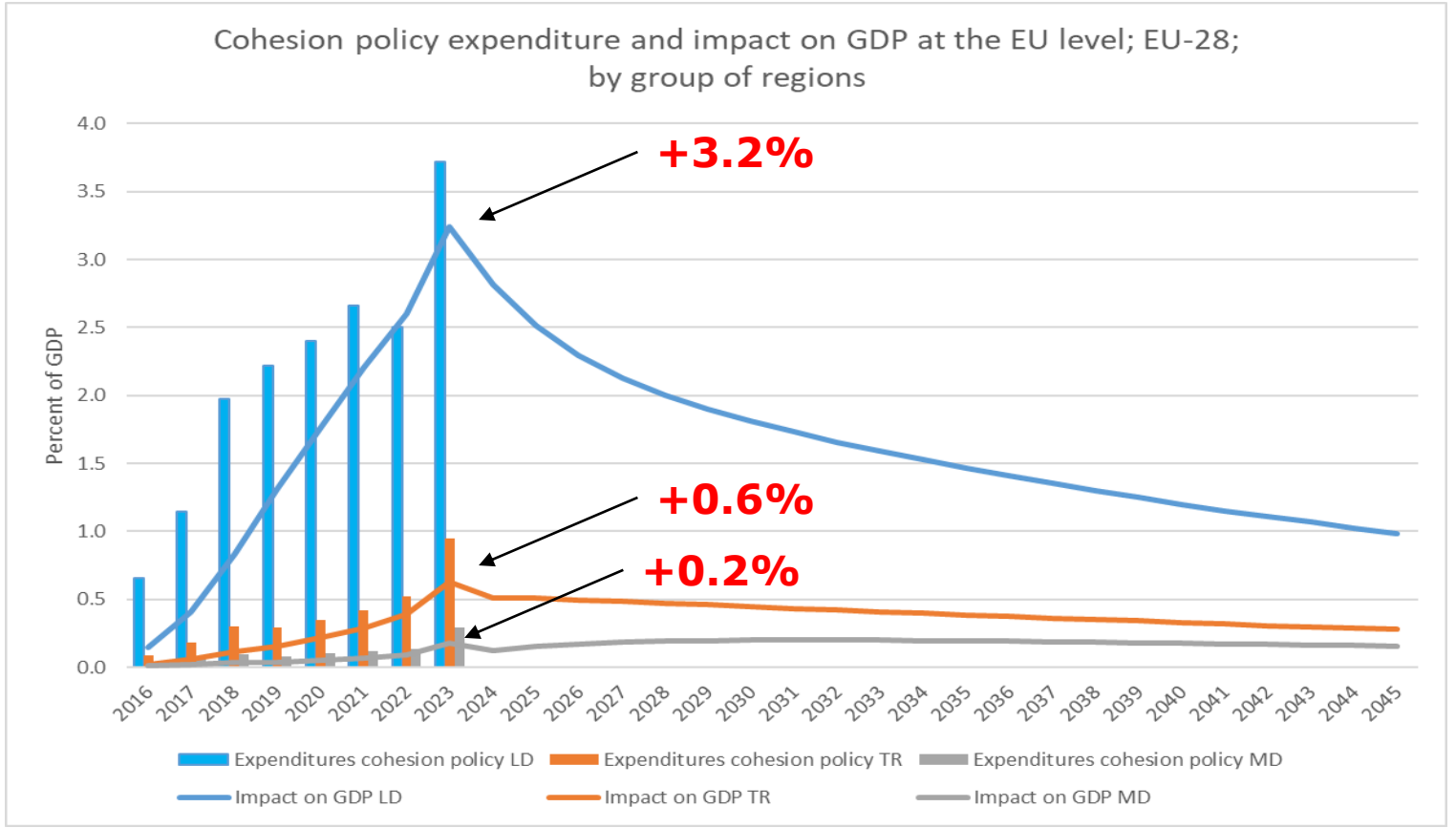
European Commission

Cohesion policy impact on GDP, 2045 vs GDP per head (base year)



Categories of regions

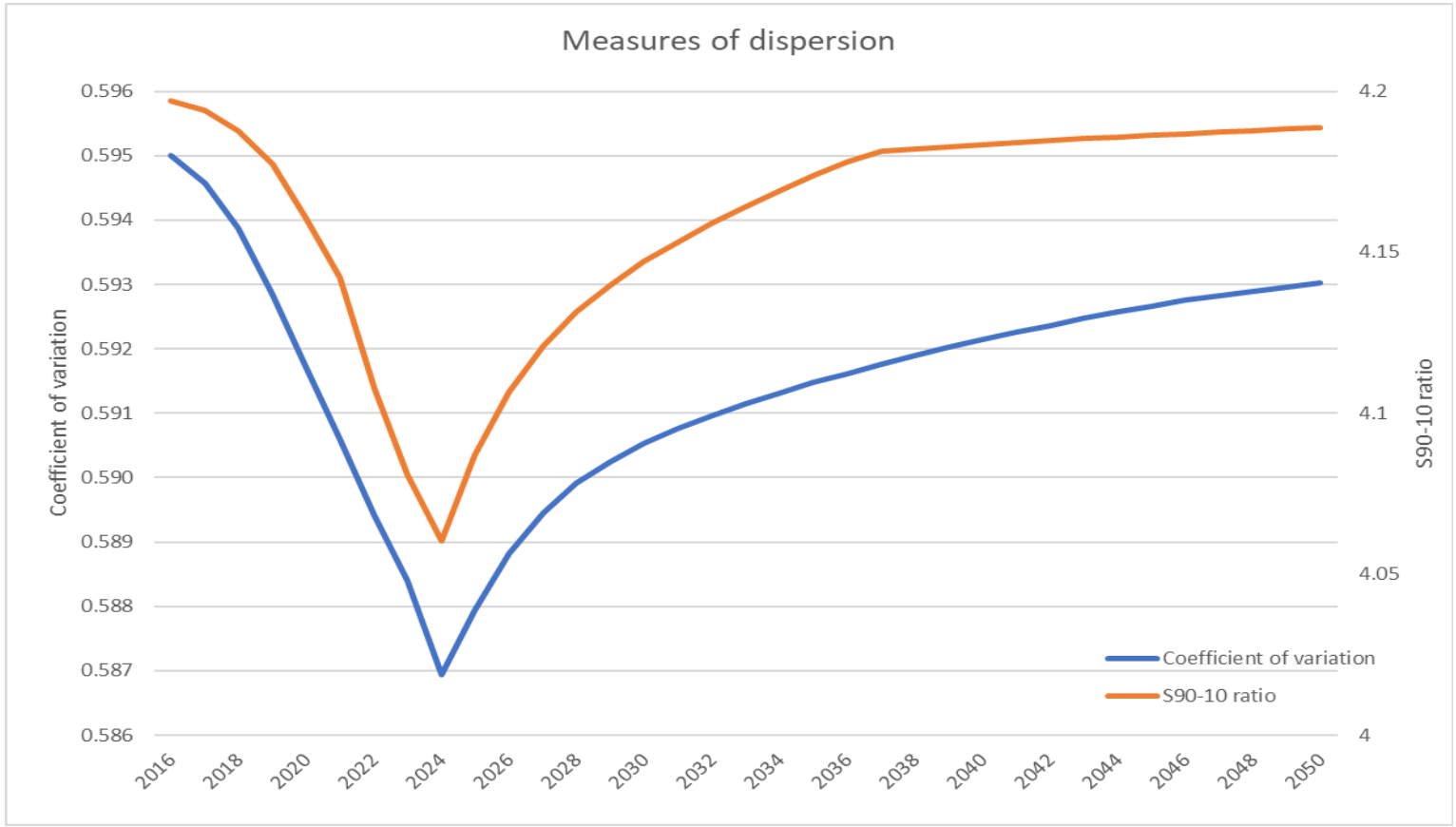
Impact on GDP in less developed, transition and more develop regions



Categories of regions

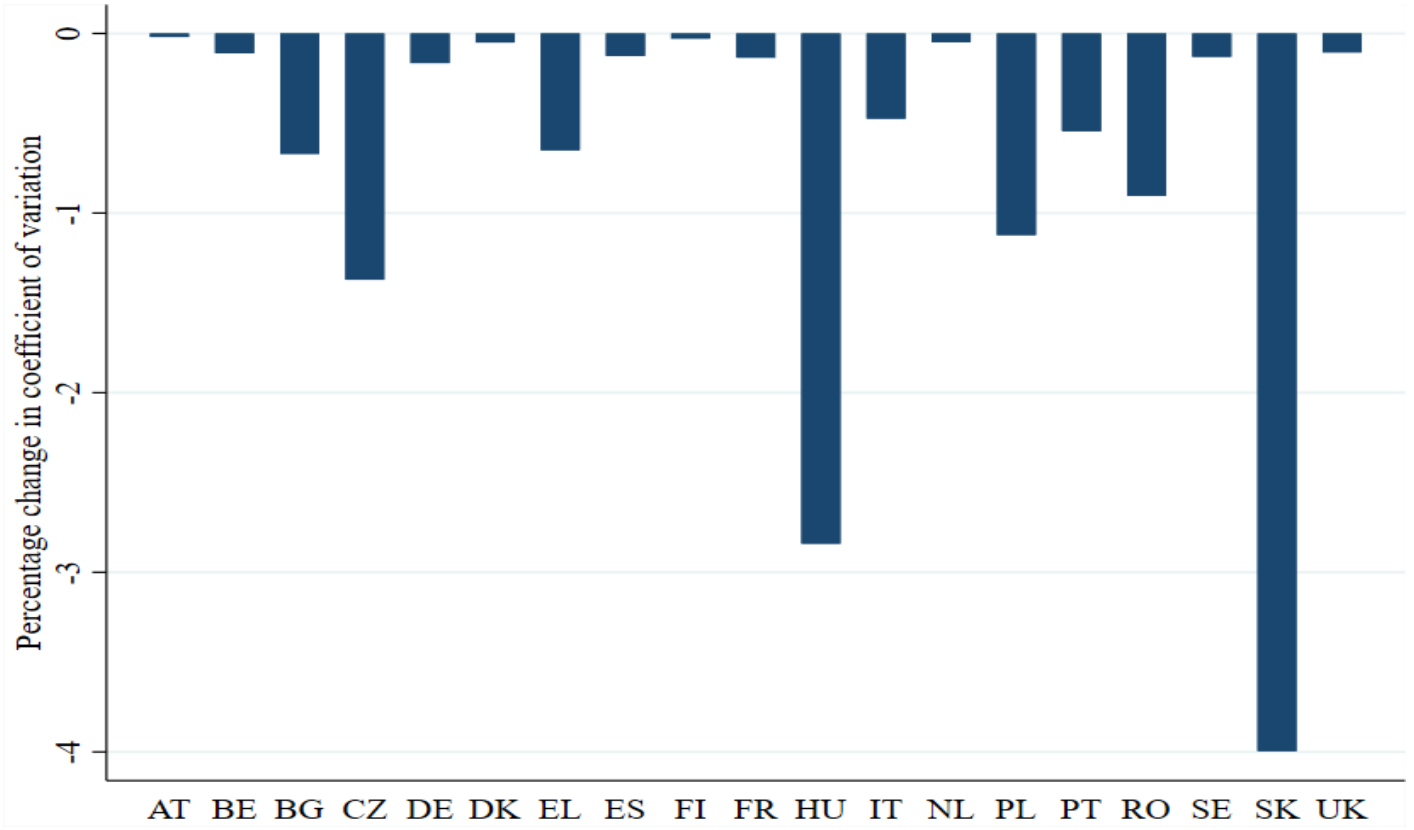
European Commission

Changes in measures of dispersion based on estimated impact of cohesion policy expenditures on GDP per capita in EU-28



Categories of regions

Impact of cohesion policy on the coefficient of variation of GDP per capita in 2023, NUTS 2 regions



Conclusions

- *The results of the simulations suggest that cohesion policy interventions have positive effects on the EU economy.*
- *In the long run, the policy investments produce positive returns, with annual rate of return of about 4%.*
- *The GDP impact is substantially larger in the less developed regions of the EU that are the main target of the policy.*
- *However, in the long run all EU regions benefit from the policy*
- *The policy has contributed to decrease or limit the increase in regional disparities.*

1. What is the state of play of your impact evaluations? What methodology do you use? Any emerging finding you would like to share?

2. Will you compare the ex-post observed results / the long-term results with what you expected ex-ante (or what you assessed short-term after the intervention)?

3. How do you assign impact in a spatial dimension? Do you know exactly where the money was spent, or do you need to “estimate” the regional dispersion (like we do at the Commission)?

Evaluation Activities – experiences from MS

Portugal Contribution
Poland Contribution

WOLAŃSKI

IMPACT EVALUATION OF URBAN MOBILITY INVESTMENT 2014-2020 IN POLAND

BRUSSELS

05.10.2023

Fundusze Europejskie Pomoc Techniczna

Rzeczpospolita Polska

MINISTERSTWO FUNDUSZY I POLITYKI REGIONALNEJ

Unia Europejska Fundusz Spójności

AGENDA

About us

Background and methodology

Outcomes

Recommendations and Conclusions

ABOUT US

A team of Evaluation, Transport and Urban Mobility experts

Lead and established by Michał Wolański, researcher at the Warsaw School of Economics

Using big data and measuring net effect since 2010

Also cooperating with international companies

OUR EXPERIENCE IN THIS PERSPECTIVE

Urban mobility investment evaluation studies:

- General ex-post study for the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy
- Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme ex-post study + 2 pilot studies for the Centre of EU Transport Projects (implementing authority)
- Eastern Poland OP ex-post for the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development

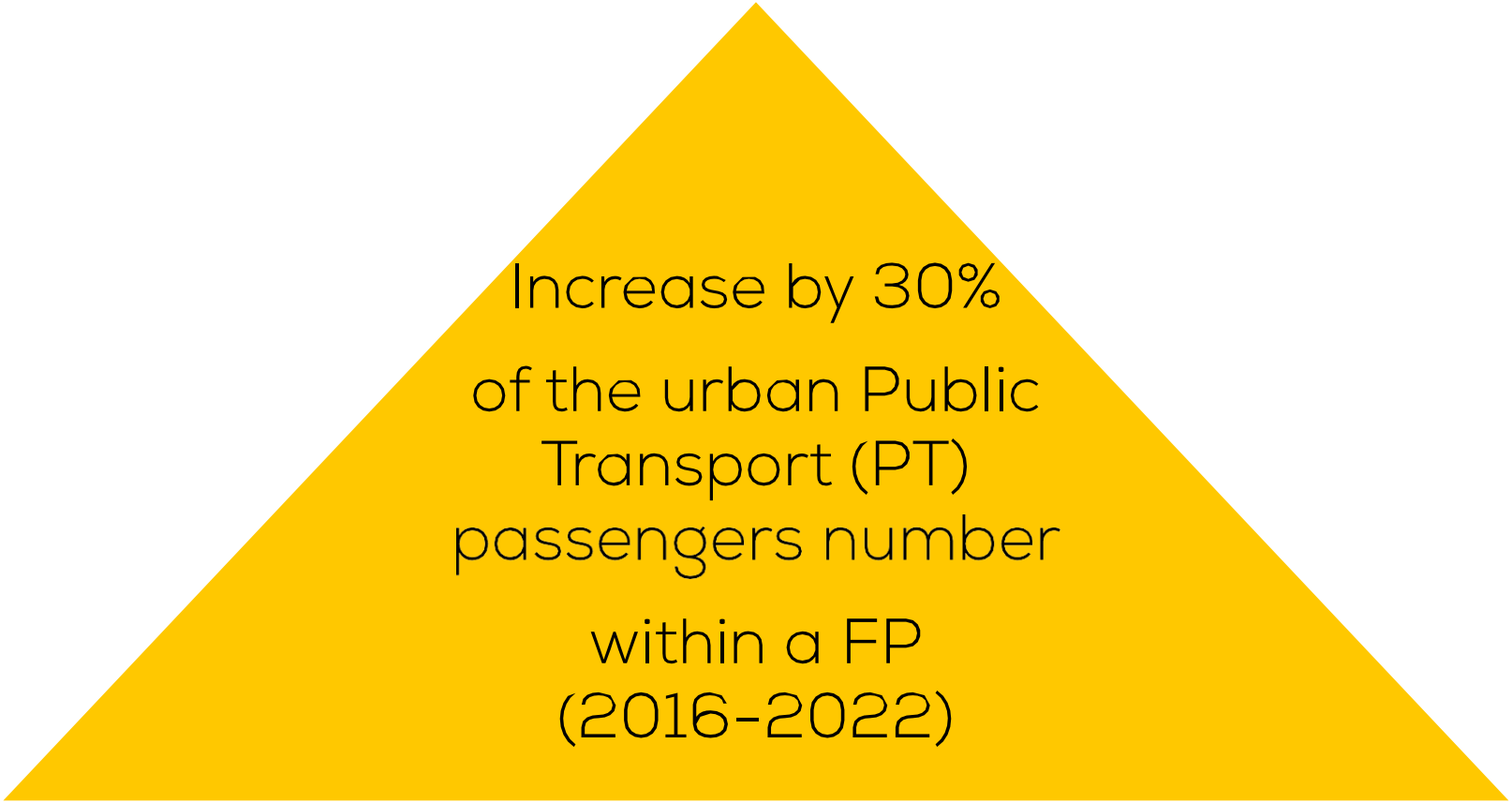
Regional Operational Programmes transport investment ex-post evaluation

- 5 regions

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans support project

- Over 30 agglomerations
- Adaptation of SUMP methodology to the Polish legal and organizational conditions

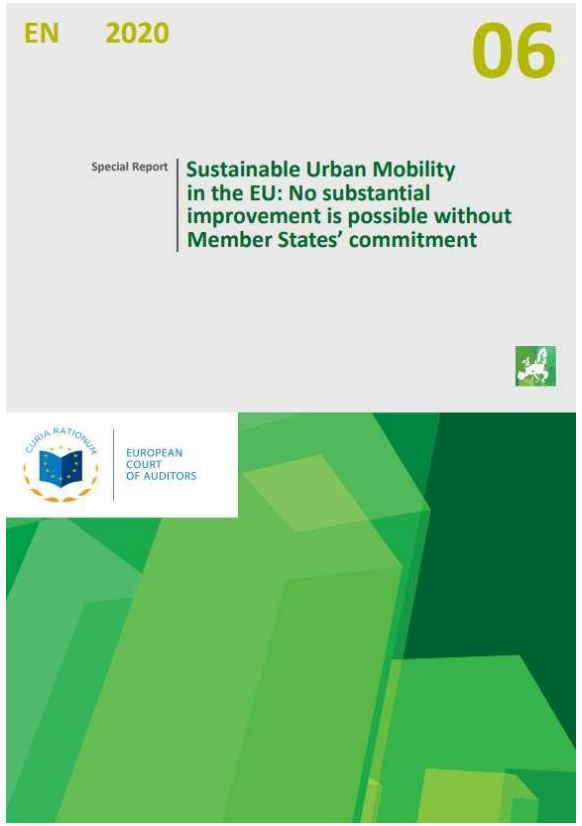
GENERAL GOAL OF THE POLISH URBAN MOBILITY POLICY



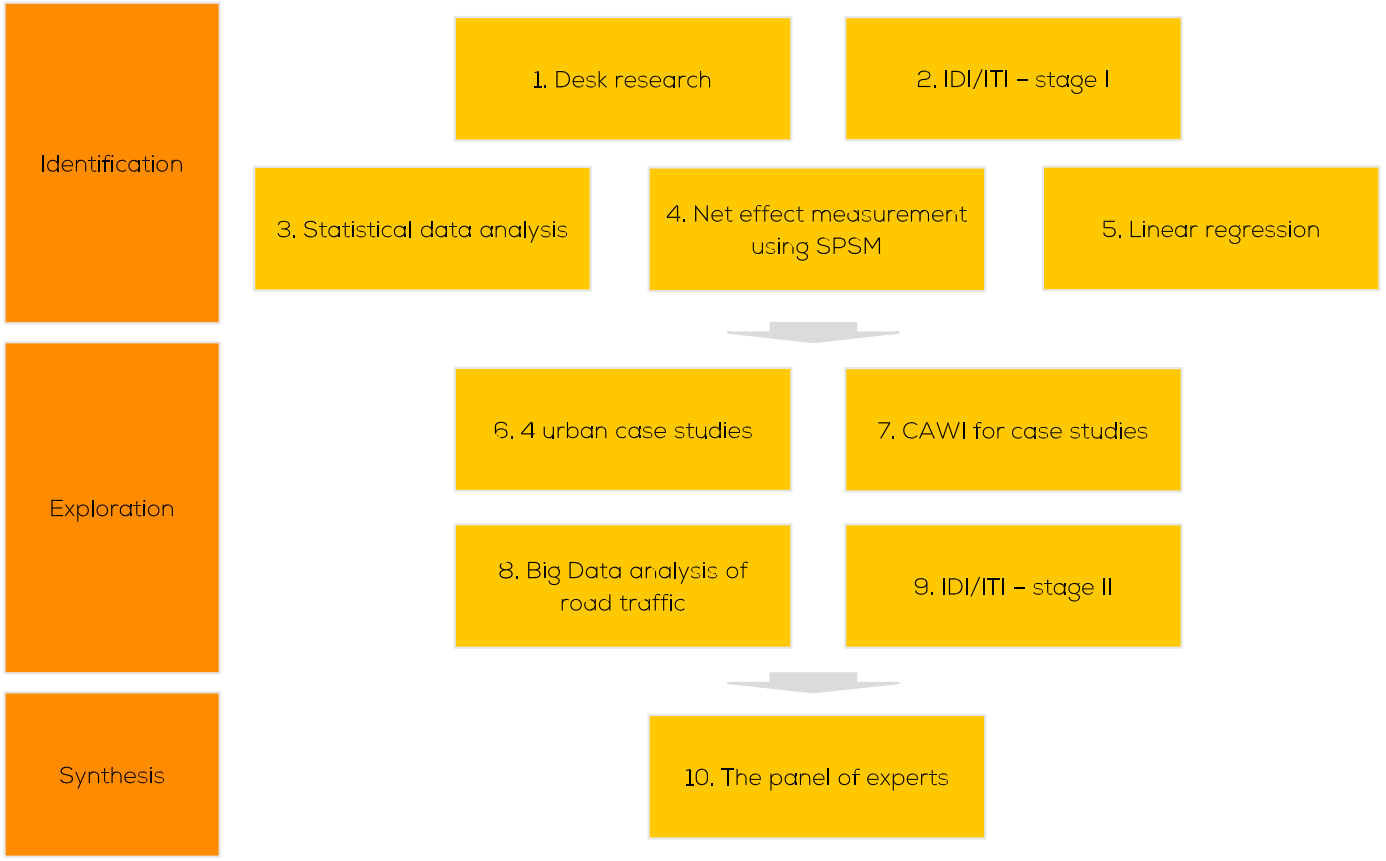
WHAT WE KNOW FROM THE PREVIOUS STUDIES?

European Court of Auditors (06/2020):

- The EU invests strongly in PT, but people still prefer cars
- This is because „Some Member States and cities did not complement EU funds effectively"
- SUMPs are the key to success and should be required



METHODOLOGY OF THE GENERAL EX-POST STUDY



OUTCOMES

Econometrics: It's not infrastructure (which we construct) that makes people use PT / increase ticket revenue (in the observed country and periods) / change modal split – it's the supply of the service

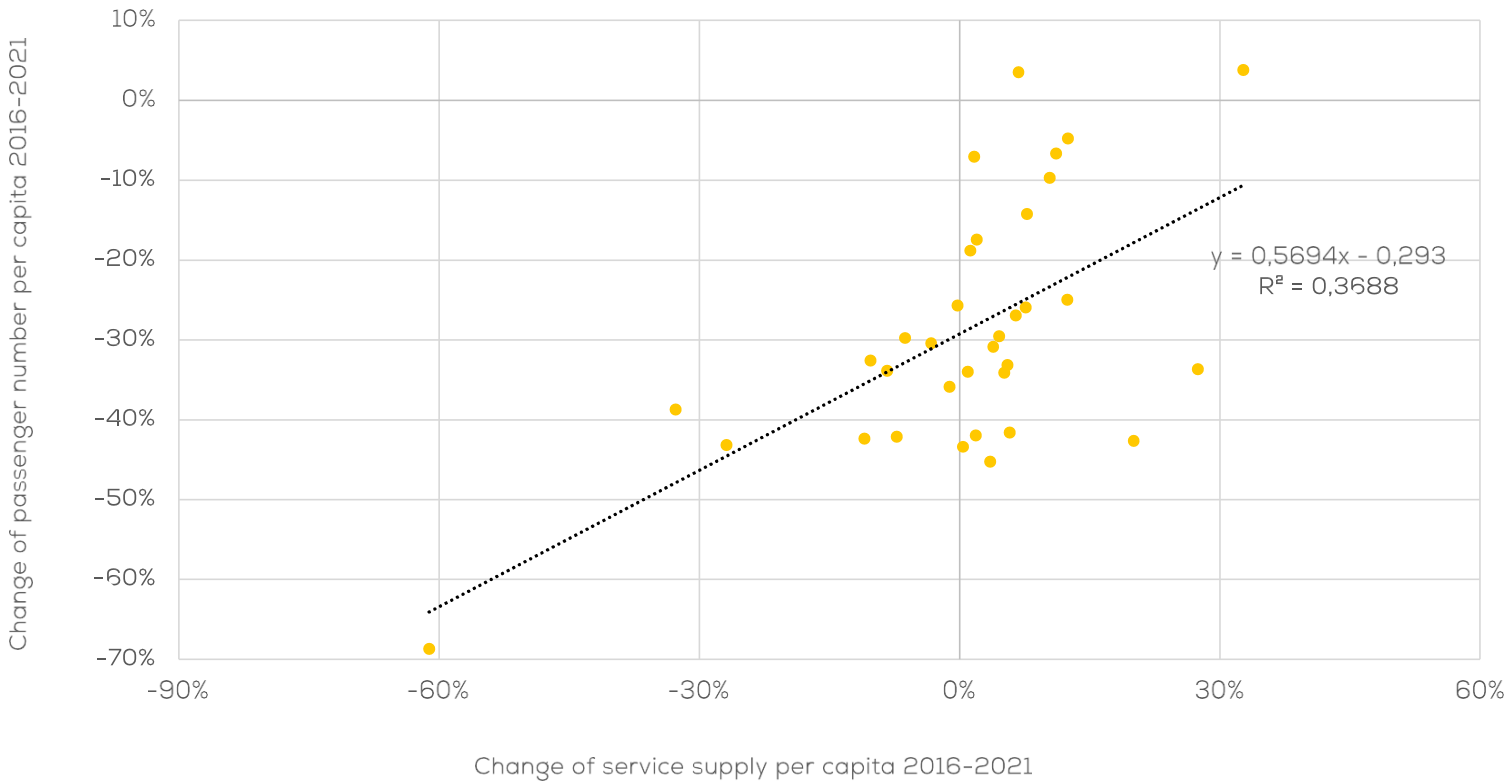
- Trace or negative net effect of PT investment
- High correlation of supply improvement and patronage

Operational financing is getting weaker, investment financing is getting better

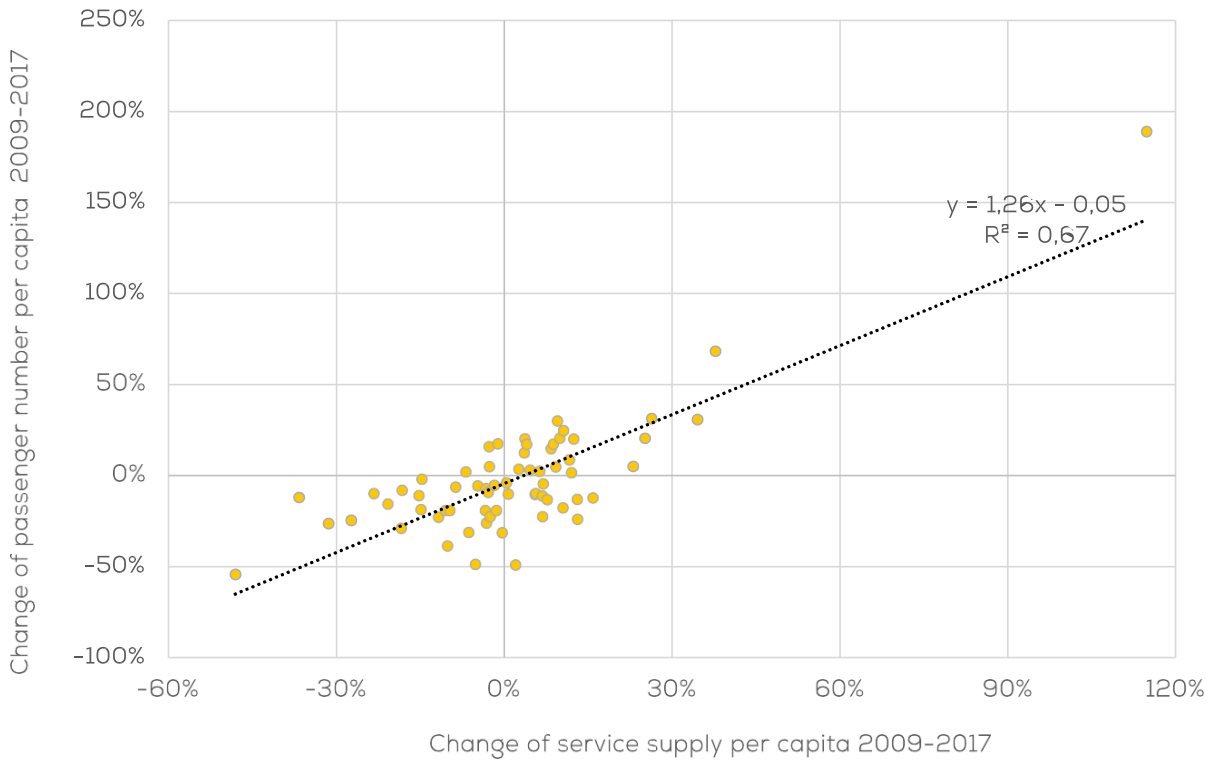
We also improve capacity of road infrastructure, but travel times do not decrease (outcomes rather from big data than econometrics)

This is known for some time already...

SERVICE SUPPLY DETERMINES PATRONAGE – 2016 -2021



SERVICE SUPPLY DETERMINES PATRONAGE – 2009 – 2017



FP 2007 – 2013

Investment till 2015

Impact data for 2017 (second full year after finishing)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCULUSIONS - MOBILITY

Public transport recovery plan is needed –
OPEX for development, legal changes

We need less road infrastructure and more regional public transport
(legal changes needed)

SUMPs and bus electrification will not solve the problem

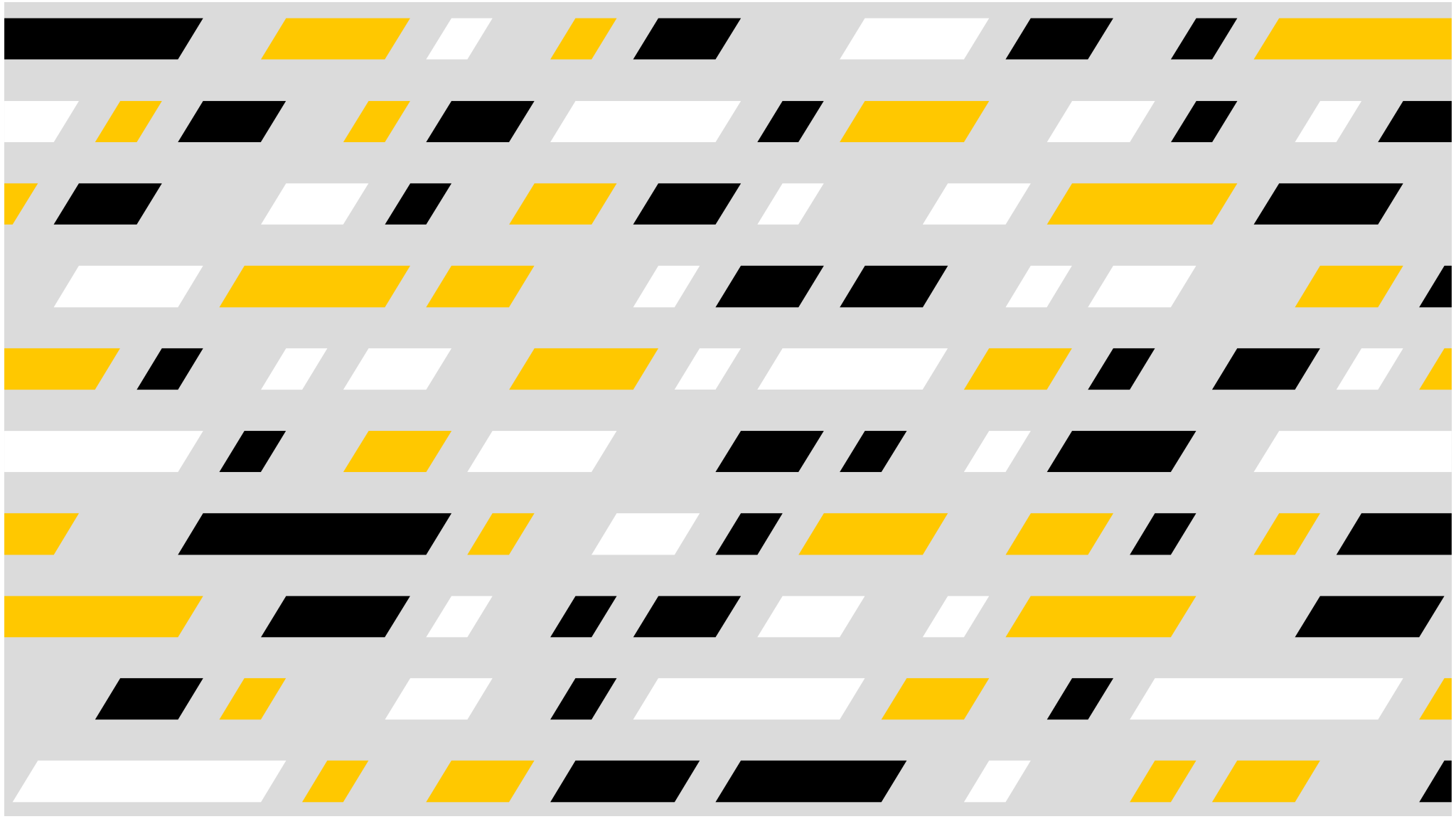
- SUMPs push problems to local authorities that should be solved at the policy / government level and may be another wishlists
- Bus electrification decreases funding for trams and smart management/ITS solutions

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCULUSIONS - EVALUATION

Quantitative modeling should be integrated, not split between the OPs

Evaluations should not be planned in the last year of OPs but according to information needs and data quality (ex. data from 2025, evaluation Q4 2026/H1 2027).

Same for many other evaluations



AD&C
Agência para o Desenvolvimento e Coesão, I.P.

Evaluation activities in Portugal

Laying out the Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Network Meeting
Brussels

5 October 2023

Table of contents:

A. Brief summary of GEP PT2020

B. Scope and institutional setting of GEP PT2030

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

1. Build upon existing knowledge
2. Consultation and dialogue with partners and stakeholders
3. Scoping, prioritisation and timetable of evaluations

D. Main challenges and how we address them

1. Improve quality
2. Increase capacity
3. Improve communication, use and follow-up

A. Brief summary of GEP PT2020

❖ Story of the Evaluation Plans

- ✓ **3rd cycle of evaluation planning** –in Portugal Evaluation Plans for the Cohesion Policy date back from the 2007–2013 programming period (they became mandatory be EU Regulations starting 2014–2020)
- ✓ **Scope and ambition have increased** from one cycle to the next
- ✓ Since the beginning, the **institutional setting and governance model has remained quite stable**

❖ In the last programming period, we carried out:

- ✓ **41 Evaluations** under GEP PT2020

Ex Ante	**4**	
Process / Implementation	**8**	
Impact	**28**	**(of which 3 not yet completed)**

- ✓ **Public Events** for the presentation of all the evaluations' results, **1 Evaluation Conference**, **1 Evaluation Seminar**
- ✓ **21 meetings** of the **Monitoring and Evaluation Network**

For the **current programming period**, we are planning:

~ 80 Evaluations, of which…

52 Impact
20 implementation
8 Global (impact)

+ 11 small scale studies in support of the implementation of Programmes

A. Brief summary of GEP PT2020 *(cont.)*

❖ Feedback of the Evaluation Helpdesk on evaluations carried out under GEP PT2020

- ✓ **Larger share of impact evaluations** than other MS
- ✓ **Most evaluations were wide-ranging**, covering whole OPs (regional or national) or broad issues
  - ➢ Advantage – gives comprehensive view of way programmes working
  - ➢ Possible disadvantage – less examination of measures or aspects in detail
- ✓ **Most impact evaluations adopted a ToC setting out causal links** –As such, conform with **best practice**
- ✓ While fewer evaluations in Portugal than elsewhere, **quality was high**:
  - ➢ Signs of **growing sophistication of evaluations**, with ToCs at centre
  - ➢ Most impact evaluation **also examined procedures and their effectiveness**
- ✓ Some **shortcomings and opportunities for improvement**:
  - ➢ Analysis and robustness of findings affected by **lack of data because results still to materialise**, but also **lack of suitable indicators** – goes to the **timing** of evaluations and **availability of data** needed to carry them out
  - ➢ **Push further** for **rigorous evaluations -** availability of **wide range of administrative data plus linking of databases mean Portugal better placed than nearly all other MS** to carry out evaluations of policy measures

B. Institutional setting of the PT 2030 Global Evaluation Plan (GEP)

❖ Monitoring and Evaluation Network

- ✓ **Cohesion and Development Agency - AD&C** (coordination)
  Is the body responsible for the technical coordination of the Cohesion Policy Funds
- ✓ **Managing Authorities**

+

- ✓ **PlanAPP**
  Competence Centre for Planning, Policy and Foresight in Public Administration
- ✓ **GPEARI**
  Ministry of Finance Office for Planning, Strategy, Evaluation and International Relations
- ✓ **Recovery and Resilience Plan** managing body

❖ Interministerial Coordination Commission - CIC PT2030

Political coordination of PT2030 (approval of the Evaluation Plan)

B. Scope of GEP PT 2030

- **Programmatic scope:**
  - ✓ **6 Funds** (ERDF, CF, ESF+, JTF, EMFAF, AMIF) — € 23bn
  - ✓ **13 Programmes**:

    Portugal 2030´s **4 Thematic Programmes + 7 Regional Programmes**

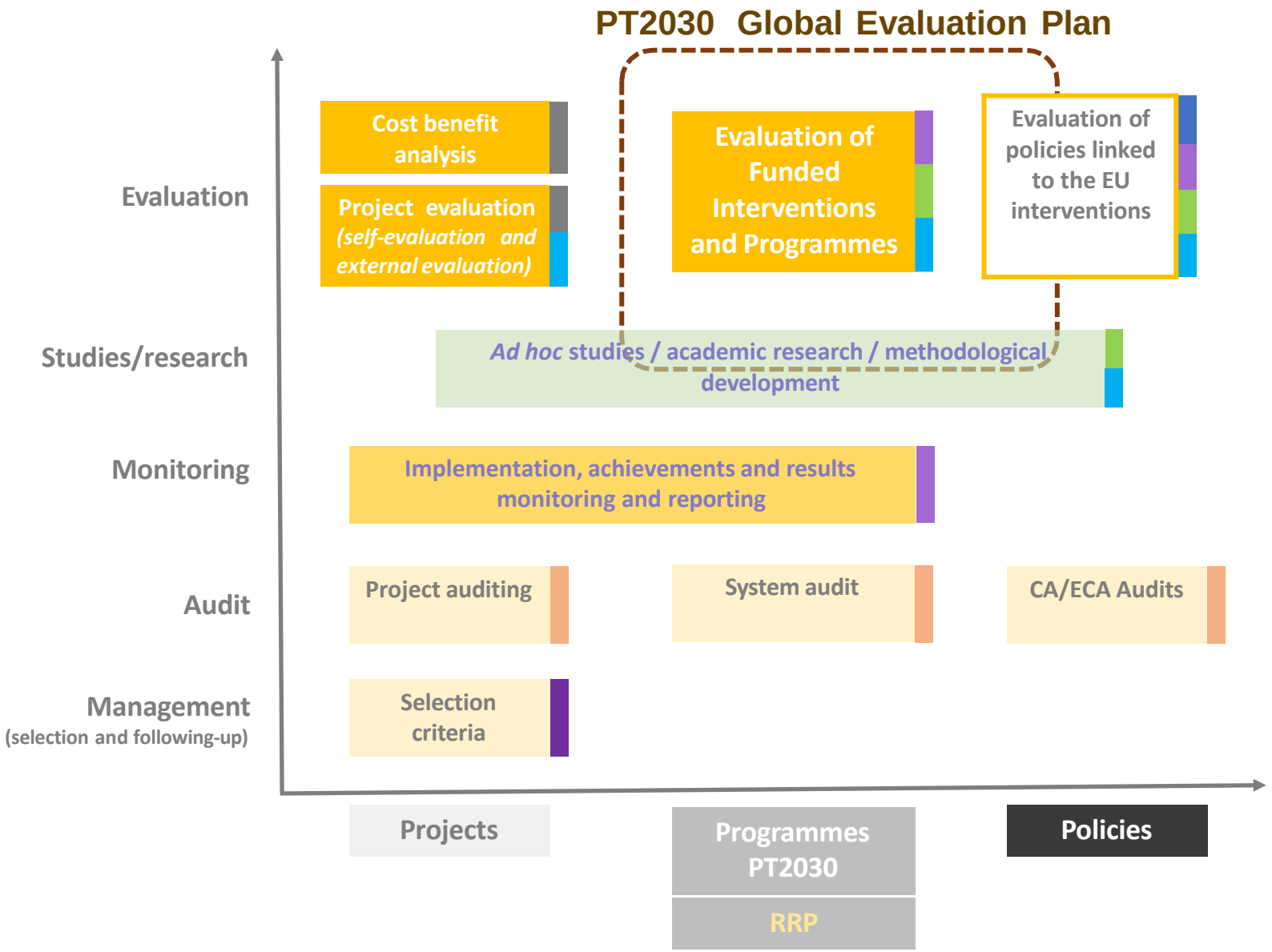
    + AMIF

    + RRP (whenever there is complementarity in the interventions) — € 22bn

- Articulation between **GEP PT2030** and **Program Evaluation Plans (PEP)**
  - ✓ **GEP PT2030 as overall evaluation plan** – covers all PEP
  - ✓ **PEP** – Plan at Programme level, in line with GEP's overall strategy

- **Legislation:**
  - ✓ **CPR** and **Performance, monitoring and evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund in 2021-2027**
  - ✓ National legislation –EU Funds **Governance Model**

B. GEP is embedded with other monitoring, accountability and learning mechanisms



Stakeholders:

- D&CA, AG, M&E network
- MA
- Other Public Administration entities (e.g. PlanAPP, GPEARI)
- Academia
- Evaluators
- Auditor; audit authorities
- Beneficiaries

B. GEP PT2030 in articulation with Programme Evaluation Plans

Plano Global de Avaliação
2021.2027

Part I:

- Mission (scope, principles and objectives)
- Governance model
- Human Resources and Budget
- Logical framework of planning
- Management of evaluations
- Communication
- Use of evaluations / *Follow-up*
- Capacity building
- Quality Assurance system

Part II:

- Evaluation strategy – why this evaluations
- List and timetable of evaluations to be carried out
- Individual evaluation Sheets

Programme Evaluation Plan

Part I
Synthesis of Part I of GEP PT2030

Part II
Evaluation strategy
List and Sheets of GEP PT2030 evaluations covering interventions financed by the Programme

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

1. Build upon existing knowledge:

- **Synthesis Report on Evaluation findings of Portugal 2020**
- **Evaluability Studies of main public policies funded by PT2030**
- Studies on Methodologies for Evaluating Public Policies – *ad hoc* studies aimed at increasing awareness and drawing Academia interest into the evaluation, building capacity and methodological development
- *Ex Ante* Evaluations of Portugal 2030 Programmes

2. Consultation and dialogue with partners and stakeholders

3. Scoping, prioritisation and timetable of evaluations

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

1. Build upon existing knowledge

*Summary Report on the results of the Portugal 2020 evaluations (***and GEP PT2020 implementation)**

❖ **Review of the GEP PT2020 implementation process - some takeaways:**

- ✓ **Effective planning and preparation of each evaluation in advance was key to success**
- ✓ The implementation of **evaluations benefits from a close monitoring of the process, namely through Steering Groups**
- ✓ **Significant push and leap forward regarding methods and quality** – as confirmed by the Helpdesk review
- ✓ **Capacity building is a work in progress** –Evaluation **"demand" and "supply" need further development**: reinforcing qualified **management capacity** and strengthening the **evaluation market**
- ✓ **Communication** ensured **wide publicity of evaluation results** – still, **effective use of evaluation results** would benefit from earlier communication with wider range of stakeholders to **foster ownership**

❖ **Synthesis of the main evaluation findings and recommendations**

- ✓ Accumulation of knowledge and **inform policy makers and policy managers**
- ✓ **Signaling knowledge gaps** and **future evaluation needs**

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

1. Build upon existing knowledge - *"Evaluability"* Studies

Carry out **Evaluability Studies** on 4 (four) key thematic areas of the previous and current programming period – **Research and Innovation, Education and Training, Climate Action, Employment and Social Inclusion**

Main tasks of the Evaluability Studies:

A. **Reviewing/drafting ToC** – through an **extensive literature review** (including previous evaluations), **stakeholders' consultation** (focus groups), and **preliminary validation against available secondary information**

B. **Identification of evaluation needs** – **knowledge gaps** highlighted in the previous step (namely literature review and stakeholders' consultation) signal **where evaluation efforts should be concentrated - they may be either implementation or impact evaluations**

C. **Identification of the most appropriate designs and methods (namely CIE and TBE for impact evaluations) and data requirements** – including ways to strengthen the monitoring systems – **to address the evaluation needs** identified in the previous step

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

2. Consultation and dialogue with partners and stakeholders

❖ **Set up the institutional framework for the Evaluation Plan**

- ✓ Monitoring & Evaluation Network (**M&E Network**)

❖ **Gather contributions from partners and stakeholders**

- ✓ To listen abroad, on 20th of October –**Seminar** "Evaluation of European Funds – from 2020 Results to the 2030 Evaluation Plan
- ✓ Discussion on the **overall strategy and principles of the Evaluation Plan**
  - ✓ *Feedback from DG Regio and DG Employment*
- ✓ Request for **contributions from partners and stakeholders regarding specific evaluation needs** (e.g: **M&E Network**, Economic and Social Council, Public Agencies, within Evaluability Studies (interviews with IB and MA)
- ✓ **Iterative process**
- ✓ Contributions from partners and stakeholders are used to **map the evaluation needs and priorities**
- ✓ Check for **overlaps**, agree on **cross-cutting themes** and identify **areas where more focused approaches are needed**
- ✓ Discuss **timing** and **intended uses** – when the evaluations are needed/feasible
- ✓ A **tentative list of evaluations** is **prepared and discussed within the M&E Network**

❖ **Inputs from the Evaluability Studies are reflected in the Plan as they are made available** (still an ongoing process)

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

3. Scoping, prioritization and timetable *(cont.)*

❖ **Scope, incidence and type of analysis - a typology**

- ✓ **Main Agendas**, covering cross-cutting themes, interdependencies and systemic interactions between policy instruments to assess **contribution towards an overall objective** (within PT2030 and in combination with RRP)
- ✓ **"thematic" evaluations**, covering specific **Geographic areas** (territorial-based priorities), **policy areas** and **policy Instruments** (may be across Programmes) where a more focused approach is needed to evaluate **Impact**
- ✓ **Programmes** or **funding instruments**, where the focus is mainly on **Implementation**

Incidence	Type of analysis	Scope	Coordinating Entity
Main Agendas	Global Evaluations	2030 Agenda Themes PT 2030 + RRP	AD&C or PlanApp
Geographic Areas	Impact Evaluation	PT 2030 + RRP NUTS / Other	CCDR /MA
Policy Areas		PT 2030 + RRP and/or PT 2020 (*ex post*) *(with or without territorial focus)*	Thematic Networks or AD&C
Policy Instruments			
Funding / Programmes	Implementation Evaluation	Programmes of PT 2030	MA
	Studies in support of implementation		

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

3. Scoping, prioritization and timetable *(cont.)*

❖ Main principles and assumptions guiding the GEP PT2030 Evaluation Strategy

- ✓ **Improve the balance** between **Implementation evaluations** and **Impact evaluations**
- ✓ **Increase the *ex post* evaluation logic that was already present in GEP PT2020**, completing the commitments assumed in the GEP PT2020 and making use of the opportunities to **carry out *ex post* PT2020 evaluations**, when interventions are similar or carried throughout PT2030 – **make evaluation results available sooner** and **better balance the evaluation load** along the programming period
- ✓ **Narrow the focus of "thematic" impact evaluations,** allowing for a **more in-depth analysis** and, whenever possible according to policy areas and policy instruments, **breaking down the results at regional level**
- ✓ **Programme's coverage with different levels of depth** and breadth, **in compliance with Article 44 (2) of CPR** – may be achieved through (a combination of) "thematic" impact evaluations (and not necessarily by a single impact evaluation for each programme)
- ✓ Consider **complementarities and articulation between PT2030 and RRP**, regarding common agendas and policy goals
- ✓ Increase the number of **Programme specific evaluations**, including the commitment made in the Programmes for a **Programme level Implementation evaluation by 2024**

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

3. Scoping, prioritization and timetable *(cont.)*

- **Criteria for setting priorities (feasibility and opportunity) and timetable**
  - ✓ **Policy relevance** (financial allocation, expected outcomes/impacts)
  - ✓ **Innovativeness** of interventions and/or interventions displaying **signs of difficulties in implementation or in achieving their goals**
  - ✓ **Knowledge gaps** – areas less well known or less evaluated in the past – and main questions (and evaluation criteria)
  - ✓ **Existing capacity** (internal and external) and **data availability**
  - ✓ Stakeholders' needs and **evaluation intended uses**

- **Type of evaluations** – Priorities and knowledge needs, in turn, inform the type of evaluation:
  - ✓ **Implementation Evaluation**
  - ✓ **Impact Evaluation**
  - ✓ **"Global" Evaluation**

C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

3. Scoping, prioritization and timetable *(cont.)*

❖ **Provisional list of evaluations and timetable**

According to **scope and priorities**:

Programming Period

- ✓ **Ex post Impact Evaluations covering PT2020 interventions**
- ✓ **Implementation Evaluations and small-scale studies** (such as revising diagnostics, target groups' characterisation, improving methodological or management tools)
- ✓ **PT2030 Impact Evaluations**

❖ **For each evaluation**, a detailed **Evaluation sheet** is set:

- ✓ Describing the **main objectives and scope of the evaluation**, **methodological approach** and **availability of data** (to ensure data needs are well anticipated and appropriate measure to access it are in place, **time frame** and **cost**
- ✓ Will be subjected to **annual review**, increasing in detail when nearing the scheduled launch
- ✓ Leave **room for flexibility and adaptation** and for an evolving context, emerging needs, …

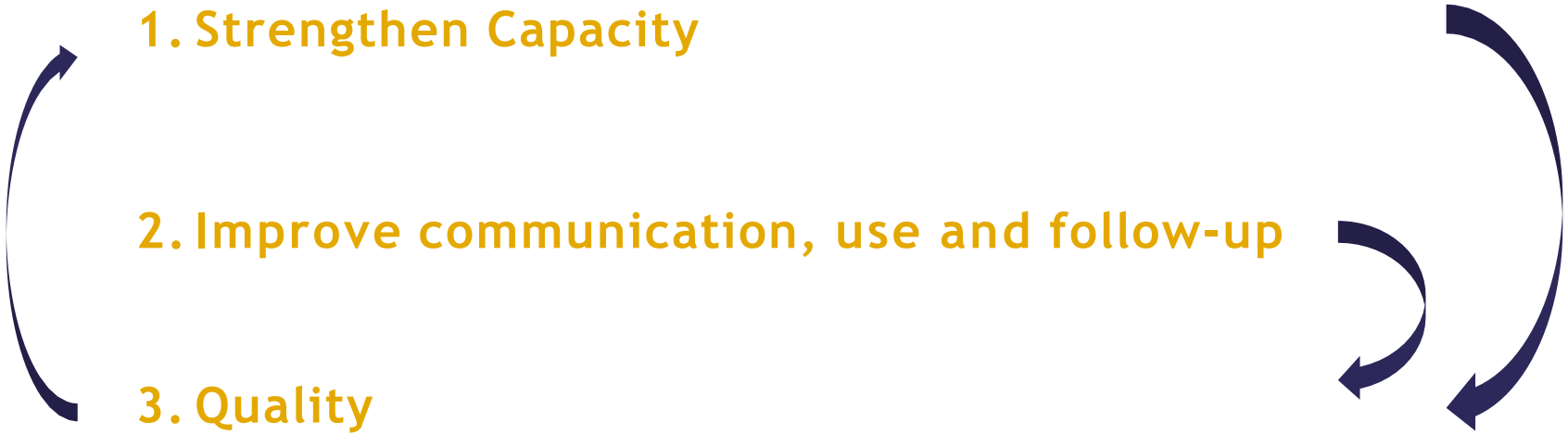
C. Stepping stones of the evaluation strategy in GEP PT2030

Evaluation Sheet

EVALUATION..... (title of the evaluation)		
Objective(s)		
Type of evaluation, according to:	Objective	
	Incidence	
Scope	Programmes	
	Territorial	
	Thematic	
	Period	
Background/Justification		
Specific uses of the evaluation		
Criteria and Evaluation Questions		
Methodological Approach		
Available data at the beginning of the evaluation		
Entity responsible for the evaluation		
Procurement procedure		
Steering Group		
Time frame:		
Launch of tender		
Start of evaluation		
Duration		
Source of funding		
Indicative price		
Observations		

D. Main challenges and how we address them (within the GEP PT2030 framework and as part of the overall strategy)

- These challenges are **not new nor exclusive to Portugal** – they **reflect, in the most part, a growing ambition for the evaluation pursued in Portugal and in the Cohesion Policy** and a need to push forward accordingly



D. Main challenges and how we address them (within the GEP PT2030 framework and as part of the overall strategy) *(cont.)*

1. Strengthen Capacity – both at the 'demand' and 'supply' side

As part of broader effort laid out by the ***Roadmap for capacity building in the EU Funds Ecosystem***

Demand side

- ✓ **Increase HR resources** and provide **training** in **evaluation planning and management** and **evaluation methods**
- ✓ Increase **networking and knowledge sharing** – within (the now broader) M&E Network and with evaluation partners
- ✓ Collect and share **technical documentation** and **evaluation guidelines**
- ✓ Organize **Evaluation Summer Schools**

Supply side

- ✓ **Drawing-in the Academia**, to build capacity and **overcome the evaluation market constraints** – an ongoing process e.g., **evaluability studies**, **methodological development studies under TA** – choose the adequate public procurement procedure for this purpose
- ✓ Encourage **networking between Academia and Evaluation Consultants**
- ✓ **Foster** the creation and/or widen the availability of **Master's and PhD courses in public policy evaluation**

D. Main challenges and how we address them (within the GEP PT2030 framework and as part of the overall strategy) *(cont.)*

2. Improve Communication, Use and Follow-up

- ✓ Taking the cue of 'Article 114' of the 2014–2020 CPR forward – prepare an **annual summary report of evaluation activities** and a final report
- ✓ **Communicate along to whole evaluation process with a wider range of stakeholders** and improve '*readability*' of evaluation reports
- ✓ Keep **Policy Briefs** as an effective tool for communicating with different audiences, alongside several evaluation products already in place (evaluation reports, graphic overview, public seminars, …) targeting different audiences
- ✓ **Overhaul the follow-up process** – improve involvement, responsiveness and ownership of agencies and policy makers

D. Main challenges and how we address them (within the GEP PT2030 framework and as part of the overall strategy)

3. Quality

- ✓ **Active involvement of stakeholders along to whole evaluation process** – e.g.: engaging the **Steering Group** at the early stages of drafting ToR; increase the role of **Monitoring Committees members**; broaden the institutional setting and evaluation scope taking **PlanAPP, GPEARI and RRP onboard the M&E Network**
- ✓ **Identify and ensure access to data** needed to carry out evaluations – e.g.: work being done in the **evaluability studies**; put in place **data access arrangements**
- ✓ **Develop ToC ahead of drafting ToR** – e.g.: work being done in the **evaluability studies**
- ✓ **Be more prescriptive regarding methodological requirements** for each evaluation (but leave room for evaluator expertise and proposal) – e.g.: work being done in the **evaluability studies**, use **Helpdesk and CRIE support**
- ✓ Persist in the **drive towards more robust methodologies -** rigorous **theory-based** and **counterfactual** methods, making use of wide range of administrative data and open data (webPortal + transparencia)
- ✓ **Keep up with the evaluations timetable and overcome delays -** e.g.: mind programme implementation constraints and context changes, set feasible timetable for each evaluation; account for commissioner's and steering groups feedback

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Agência para o Desenvolvimento e Coesão, I.P.

Thank you!

Carla Leal
Pedro Mendes

Innovative evaluation practices

Viktoria Bolla, Team Leader, Unit B.2, DG REGIO
Tillmann Heidelk, Unit B.2, DG REGIO

European Commission

1.How do you evaluate your evaluations? Do you have regular reflections on what elements of your evaluation design and methodology are still fit for purpose or would require improvement?

2. What aspect of your evaluation activities did you consider needed a new approach during the design and planning of your 21-27 Evaluation Plans?

3. How do you collect data, especially for counterfactual analysis? And what type of data do you collect?

Thank you and...let's Network!

All participants are invited for a drink on common space on the ground-floor!