Factsheet on Cohesion Policy implementation and performance

Case study regions in Greece

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| **Basic info** | **Central Macedonia** | **Greece** | **Unit** |
| Population [2008] | 1905.9 | 11060.9 | thous. |
| GDP [2008] | 33304 | 241990 | mln EUR |
| Population [2014] | 1903.4 | 10926.8 | thous. |
| GDP [2014] | 23859 | 177559 | mln EUR |
| ***Total allocation*** |
| Allocation ERDF+CF [2000-2006] | 2701.6 | 18676.0 | mln EUR |
| Allocation ERDF+CF [2007-2013] | 3843.3 | 26396.2 | mln EUR |
| Ratio [period 2007-2013 to 2000-2006] | 1.42 | 1.41 | ratio |
| ***Absorption rates ERDF+CF*** |
| Absorption rate 2000-2006 [final] | 96.4 | 96.8 | per cent |
| Absorption rate 2007-2013 [in 2014] | 52.8 | 52.4 | per cent |

The region of Central Macedonia has received a smaller amount of Structural Funds in per capita terms, than the national average - 2.02 thous. EUR in Central Macedonia, and 2.42 on average in Greece in the programming period 2007-2013. This discrepancy had been stable over time, as both the total allocations for Central Macedonia and Greece grew by approx. 40% between the last two completed programming periods. The rate of absorption for the 2007-2013 period is low, and very much alike in Central Macedonia and in Greece as a whole.

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| **Thematic structure** [NUTS-2, 2007-13, ERDF+CF] | **Central Macedonia** | **Greece** |
| ***% of allocation*** |
| Category A “Innovative enivironment”: business support, human resources, IT infrastructure and services, research and technology | 28.2% | 26.1% |
| Category B ”Basic infrastructure”: energy, environment and natural resources, transport infrastructure | 53.9% | 57.0% |
| Category C “Quality of life”: social infrastructure, tourism and culture, urban and rural regeneration | 16.8% | 14.5% |
| ***Rate of absorption [in 2014]*** |
| Category A “Innovative enivironment”: business support, human resources, IT infrastructure and services, research and technology | 53.5% | 52.9% |
| Category B ”Basic infrastructure”: energy, environment and natural resources, transport infrastructure | 50.3% | 52.0% |
| Category C “Quality of life”: social infrastructure, tourism and culture, urban and rural regeneration | 59.3% | 50.6% |

\* % of allocation does not add to 1, because the “technical assistance” is not included in any of the categories.

The thematic structure of allocation for Central Macedonia is very much alike the national average, with more than half of the ERDF and CF funds devoted to the Category B, that represents mainly infrastructural projects. The rate of absorption is balanced across the three thematic categories. Interestingly, the rate of absorption in the field of quality of life is the top performer for Central Macedonia, while on average in Greece spending in this category is falling behind the other two (altough, the differences are very small).

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| **Regional OP** [ERDF] | **Central Macedonia** | **Greece** | **Unit** |
| ***Allocations to Regional OPs*** |
| Allocation 2007-2013 | 4468.7 | 13351.5 | mln EUR |
| Allocation 2014-2020 | 640.6 | 16094.7 | mln EUR |
| Ratio [period 2014-2020 to 2007-2013] | n/a | 1.21 | ratio |
| ***Reported achievements: period 2007-2013 [as in 2013]\**** |
| Aggregated jobs | (1286) | 21006 | jobs |
| Reconstructed roads | 42 | 2646 | km |
| Start-ups supported | 585 | 2611 | number |
| Research jobs created | 323 | 1422 | jobs |
| Direct investment aid projects to SME | 1312 | 25347 | number |

\* Achievements are reported either at the programme level (spanning multiple NUTS2 regions) or for a particular NUTS2 region covered by a given Regional OP. Where no values were reported at the regional level, data for the programme-level was used instead (in parentheses). The majority of the achievements in the table above are reported for the NUTS2 regions, but nonetheless these values should be interpreted cautiously.

The Greek implementation system of the Structural Funds has changed significantly between the last two programming periods. In the 2007-2013 period over a third of all ERDF funds was channelled through multiregional OPs – programmes that were covering more than one NUTS2 region (e.g. *OP Macedonia and Thrace* that included not only Central Macedonia, but also Western Macedonia and Eastern Macedonia & Thrace). In the subsequent period, the multiregional OPs were discontinued, and more funds were devoted to programmes that were covering a single NUTS2 region. Thus, the allocations to Regional OPs cannot be compared across different programming periods.

Analysis of the reported achievements shows that only about 6% of jobs created as a result of Cohesion Policy in Greece was attributed to the OP Macedonia and Thrace. On the other hand, Central Macedonia seems to prioritise supporting start-ups and creation of research jobs – the reported regional values constitute over 20% of a respective achievement at the national level.