Factsheet on Cohesion Policy implementation and performance

Case study: Ireland

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| **Basic info** | **Southern & Eastern** | **Ireland** | **Unit** |
| Population [2008] | 3266.6 | 4457.8 | thous. |
| GDP [2008] | 153147 | 187547 | mln EUR |
| Population [2014] | 3372.7 | 4605.5 | thous. |
| GDP [2014] | 155860 | 189046 | mln EUR |
| ***Total allocation*** |  |  |  |
| Allocation ERDF+CF [2000-2006] | 1730.1 | 2537.0 | mln EUR |
| Allocation ERDF+CF 2007-2013 | 176.0 | 467.7 | mln EUR |
| Ratio [period 2007-2013 to 2000-2006] | 0.10 | 0.18 | ratio |
| ***Absorption rates ERDF+CF*** |  |  |  |
| Absorption rate 2000-2006 [final] | 94.5 | 94.5 | per cent |
| Absorption rate 2007-2013 [in 2014] | 78.8 | 71.2 | per cent |

The Southern & Eastern region (S&E) accounted in 2014 for over 70% of the country’s population and over 80% of the national GDP. The region’s share in country-level total allocation has fallen from 68% in the 2000-2006 period, to 38% for the 2007-2013 period. This change was caused by a shift in eligibility of Irish regions for support under the Objective 1/Convergence and resulted in a significant decrease of the total allocations – by 82% at the country level, and by 90% for S&E. The 2014 absorption rate in the case study region was relatively high, amounting to 79%.

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| **Thematic structure** [Reg OP, 2007-13, ERDF+CF] | **Southern & Eastern** | **Ireland** |
| ***% of allocation***  |  |  |
| Category A “Innovative enivironment”: business support, human resources, IT infrastructure and services, research and technology | 88.6% | 60.0% |
| Category B ”Basic infrastructure”: energy, environment and natural resources, transport infrastructure | 5.1% | 33.3% |
| Category C “Quality of life”: social infrastructure, tourism and culture, urban and rural regeneration | 5.9% | 6.1% |
| ***Rate of absorption [in 2014]*** |  |  |
| Category A “Innovative enivironment”: business support, human resources, IT infrastructure and services, research and technology | 75.2% | 68.6% |
| Category B ”Basic infrastructure”: energy, environment and natural resources, transport infrastructure | 94.8% | 74.3% |
| Category C “Quality of life”: social infrastructure, tourism and culture, urban and rural regeneration | 90.4% | 62.5% |

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

The thematic structure of allocation of ERDF and CF funds highlights the relative importance of investments in an innovative environment (Category A) in S&E, as compared to the national average. In both cases, allocations for the Category C, involving mainly measures to increase quality of life, play only a minor role. The thematic rates of absorption in S&E are higher but also more dispersed, than national-level values. The absorption rate for the Category A lags behind the other two, by 15-20 pp, but nonetheless exceeds the national average.

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| **Regional OP** [ERDF] | **Southern & Eastern** | **Ireland** | **Unit** |
| ***Allocations to Regional OPs*** |  |  |  |
| Allocation 2007-2013 | 146.8 | 413.5 | mln EUR |
| Allocation 2014-2020 | 249.1 | 409.2 | mln EUR |
| Ratio [period 2014-2020 to 2007-2013] | 1.70 | 0.99 | ratio |
| ***Reported achievements: period 2007-2013 [as in 2013]*** |  |  |  |
| Jobs created | 3841 | 6833 | jobs |
| Research jobs created | 820 | 1002 | jobs |
| Direct investment aid projects to SME | 7488 | 8315 | number |

Allocation for the S&E Regional OP amounted to 36% of total ERDF funds devoted to regional programmes in Ireland in the 2007-2013 programming period. The subsequent programming period followed a more balanced distribution pattern, with allocation for the previosuly mentioned OP growing by 70%. The reported number of jobs created as a result of the implementation of the S&E OP amounted to 3.8 thous., while the country total was 6.8 thous. The S&E’s share in the country-level achievements was significantly larger with regard to research jobs created and projects providing direct investments to SMEs.