

CohesioNet Seminar  
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THEMATIC CONCENTRATION  
VS.  
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH  
TO DEVELOPMENT

# Issues

- **I. State of play**

- Buzzwords
- Forces and stakes

- **II. Dilemmas**

- Strategic
- Practical

- **III. A basis for progress?**

- **Σ. How to solve it?**

# I. State of Play

## ⊙ Buzzwords

- **EU 2020** – European added value
- „**Focus on results**” – conditionalities
- **Concentration** – critical mass, menu
- **Integrated policy** – c.p. as main tool
- **Territorial cohesion** – strength in diversity
- **Solidarity** – c.p.’s own objectives...

# I. State of Play

## ⊙ **Forces** (simplified)

- Net contributors – „reduce contribution to EU budget”
- Net recipients – „solidarity”
- MS Cohesion policy managers – „results vs. rules”
- Commission / DG Regio – „EU added value”
- Stakeholders of other policies – „new challenges”

## ⊙ **Leading to...** (apparently)

- **Top-down push** towards EU 2020 – and away from cohesion
- **Bottom-up push** for cohesion – and against reform
- **Outside pressure** to replace the policy with other tools

# II. Dilemmas

## ⦿ Strategic

- Impact ≠ EU 2020
- Debate on Coh. Policy – link to other debates?
- Simplification debate lost
- Bottom-up needed for acceptance & success

## ⦿ Practical

- Evaluations of 2007-2013? Where to go?
- Contract vs. a programme? More? Binding?
- Concentration may reduce absorption
- No other development tools available in some MS
- No guarantee that funds will be there...

# III. A basis for progress?

- ⊙ **EU 2020 is an accepted focal point**
  - $\leftrightarrow$  incomplete and biased
- ⊙ **Focus on results general desire**
  - $\leftrightarrow$  simplification debate „lost”
- ⊙ **Territorial cohesion „upgraded”**
  - $\leftrightarrow$  risk to collide with top-down approach
- ⊙ **Solidarity with „poorest” undisputed**
  - $\leftrightarrow$  loses if put in contrast to competitiveness



# Σ How to solve it, then?

## Do

- Stress link to other policies
- Reform program structure
- Have all EU 2020 addressed
- Use core indicators
- Strong positive conditionality
- Strengthen link to national policy
- Integrate non-subsidy tools
- Relaunch simplification debate

## Do not

- Focus on input and not output
- Think that top-down cleverer
- Change what works
- Absorb „new tasks” into cohesion policy without a guarantee for funding
- Be more shy than opponents



CP is uniquely placed to serve EU competitiveness



Badly needed as next step in Economic Union

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