



Guidance on Synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon2020 and other innovation-related EU Funds

State of Play

Disclaimer: These PPTs reflect the views only of the author and are not the official Commission position. Regulatory references and interpretations thereof may differ from the final guidance.

Katja Reppel
Deputy Head of Unit
CC Smart and Sustainable Growth
DG Regional and Urban Policy



Structure

1. Why synergies between EU funding programmes?
2. Why guidance for policy-makers and intermediaries?
3. What are the basic rules to be respected?
4. What to do (and what not) to achieve synergies?
5. Timing for Commission services work



1. Why synergies between EU funding programmes for R&I?

- Shrinking public budgets
- Missed opportunities
- Silo-thinking hampers innovation

... why now? (and not much earlier)



European
Commission

"Up-stream"

"Down-stream"

ESIF

**Horizon
2020**

€80-100 billion

€72 billion

"Staircase to Excellence"

**"Research
Excellence"**

Hopefully also excellence, but
"Innovation Excellence"

National/Regional
R&I systems

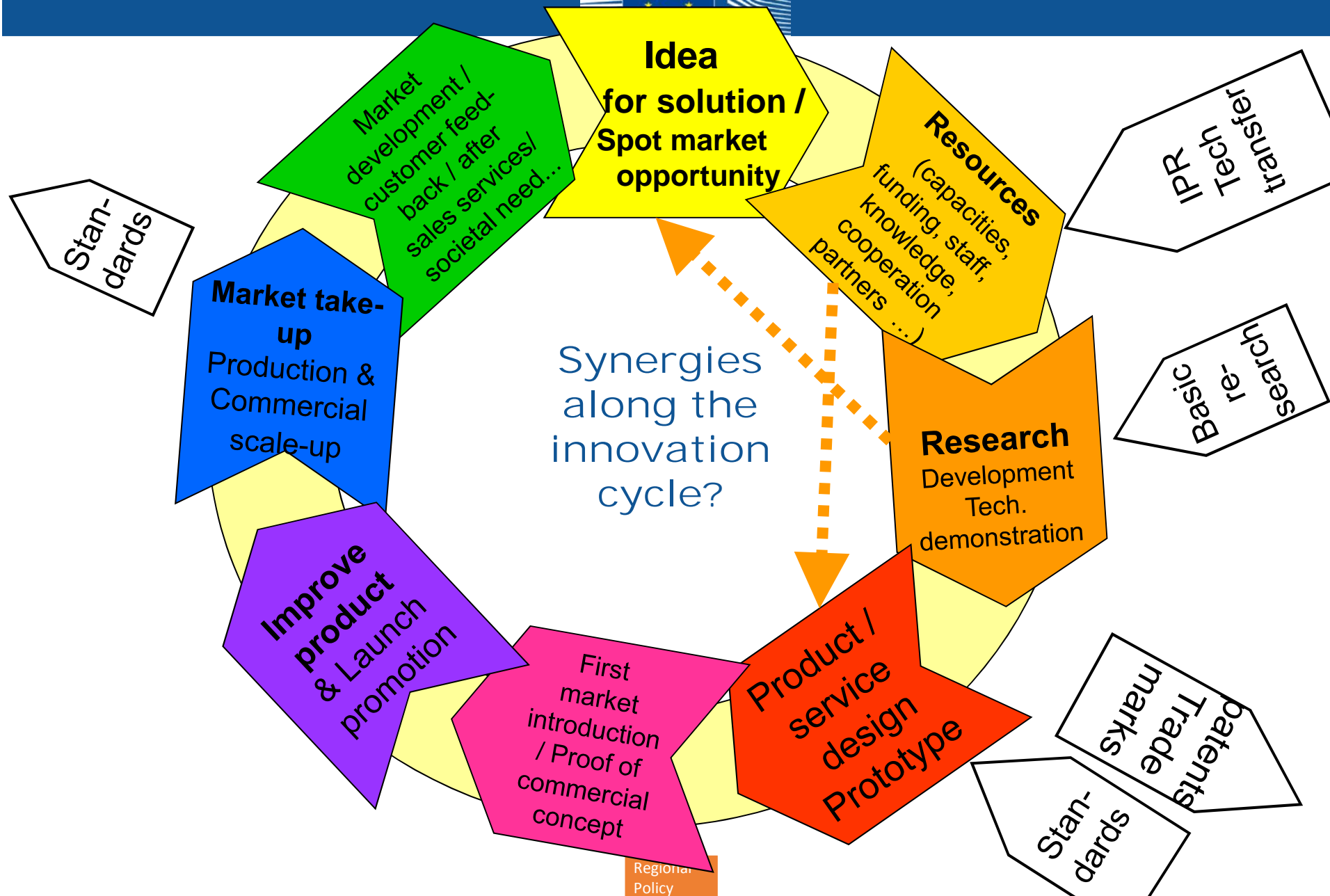
Capacity Building

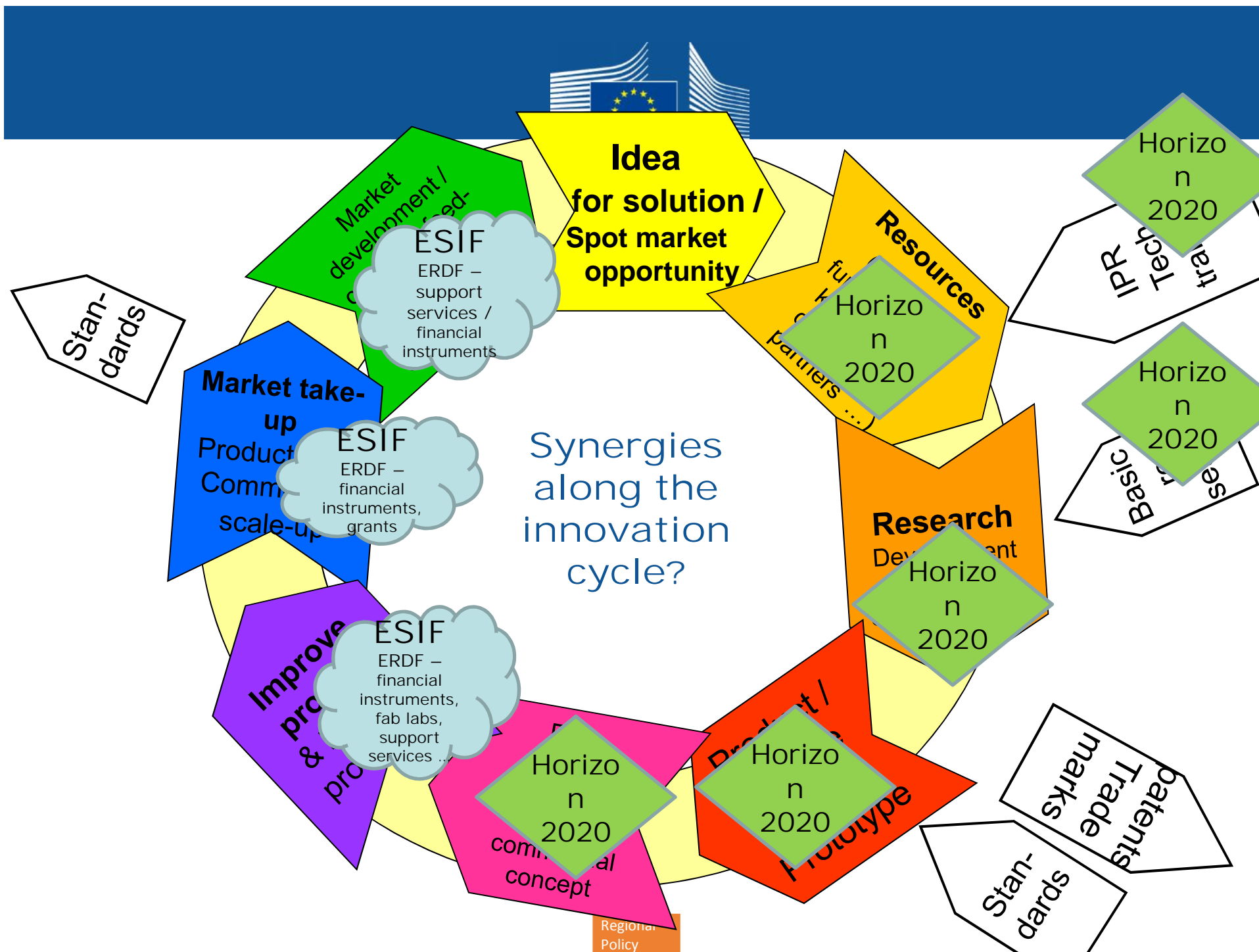
Research & Development

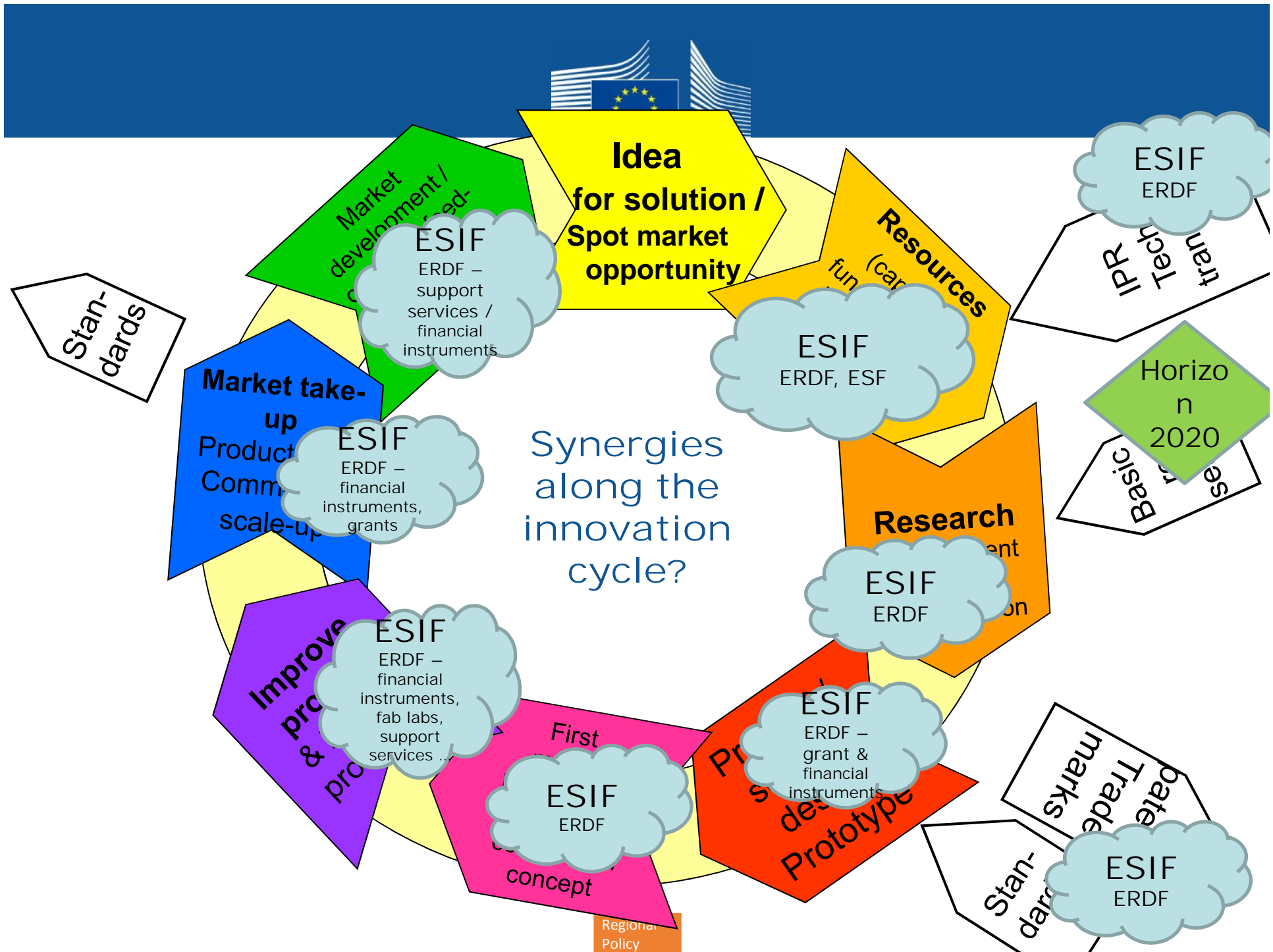
Innovation

Market

Regional
Policy









Legal base for combination of H2020 and ESI F

- Article 55(8) CPR & Art.31 RfP Horizon2020: combination of funding from different EU funding instruments in different expenditure / cost items encouraged
- Similar cost options that may facilitate combining funds: lump sums, flat rates, unit costs etc. (Art 57 CPR & H2020 rules for participation)
- Common Strategic Framework – annex 1 to CPR: synergies and complementarity of Horizon 2020 and other centrally managed EU programmes in the areas of research and innovation
... in particular in an "up-stream" – "down-stream" logic

Cost vs. expenditure item?

ESIF

Art. 55(8) CPR: "An operation may receive support from one or more European Structural and Investment Funds or from one or more programmes and from other Union instruments, provided that the expenditure item included in a request for payment for reimbursement by one of the ESI Funds does not receive support from another Fund or Union instrument, or support from the same Fund under another programme."

➤ Definitions according to (Art. 2 CPR)

Operation = a project, contract, action or group of projects selected by the MA [...] contributing to the objectives of the priority or priorities to which it relates; in the context of financial instruments, the operation is constituted by the financial contributions from a programme to financial instruments and the subsequent financial support provided by these financial instruments;

Action = a type of operation to be supported by the CSF Funds to achieve the objectives of a programme

Horizon2020

Article 31 Rules for participation:

"An action for which a grant from the Union budget has been awarded may also give rise to the award of a grant on the basis of Regulation [Horizon 2020] provided that the grants do not cover the same cost items."

➤ Definitions (Art. 2 Horizon2020 Regulation)

'research and innovation activities' = whole spectrum of activities of RTD, demonstration and innovation, including [...] dissemination and optimisation of results and stimulation of the training and mobility of researchers in the Union;

'direct actions' = R&I activities undertaken by the Commission through its Joint Research Centre;

'indirect actions' mean R&I activities to which the Union provides financial support and which are undertaken by participants

Operation = project with several components / grant agreements / H2020 actions

Expenditure item = Cost item

HOWEVER: What exactly is a cost item differs under Horizon2020 depending on the project format (different grant contract types, e.g. for Art 185, Marie S. Curie, ...)



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Bringing together 2 different worlds ... ?

Horizon 2020	European Structural and Investment Funds
DIFFERENCES:	
Non-territorial, mainly transnational approach based on excellence; Horizon 2020 does not take into account geographic specificities in allocating funding.	Place-based approach supporting economic and social cohesion
Focus on individual R&I projects tackling the whole cycle of innovation, taking into account strategic approaches at EU level, e.g. through European Innovation Partnerships and the Strategic Energy Technology plan (although some programme co-funding for research coordination like ERA-NETs, etc.)	Largely focused on improving the R&I capacities and R&I eco-systems with the objective of regional growth and place-based economic transformation towards higher added value and more knowledge-intensive activities (smart specialisation strategies).
Centrally managed (EC) and awarded directly to final beneficiaries or managed by a multi-country entity; In the case of Erasmus+, partially decentralised and awarded through National Agencies	Shared management with national and regional public intermediaries (managing authorities, implementing agencies and intermediate bodies) which define the implementation details and allocate the funding to final beneficiaries
Competitive calls for proposals addressed to international groupings (including beyond the EU) without geographic pre-allocation. (European Research Council and Marie Skłodowska-Curie as well as Erasmus+ actions for learning mobility also address individuals)	Policy-related prioritisation based on cohesion considerations and RIS3 priorities with allocation to individual firms/bodies and consortia within the territory covered by the operational programme (and only within the EU). Use of competitive attribution through calls and aid schemes based on project selection criteria is also increasingly used (depending on MS).



Synergies between Horizon2020 & ESIF is no easy business

Differences between the programmes:

- Multi-country approach (consortia) vs. place-based (single beneficiaries)
- Competition for funds vs. geographical pre-allocation
- Annually adjusted work programmes vs. 7-year-OP
- Centralised management vs. implementation by MS/regions
- Research excellence vs. socio-economic development
- ...



Synergies between Horizon2020 & ESIF is no easy business

Even the new opportunities take effort to
seize them:

- ✓ Similar cost options: lump sums, flat rates, unit costs...
BUT: are MA sufficiently familiar with Horizon2020 rules to be able
(and willing) to align?
- ✓ Horizon: actions to "close the innovation divide" and widen
participation (ERA Chairs, networks, teaming and twinning,
research infrastructures, ...)
BUT: Can timing be synchronised with ESIF operations?
- ✓ ESIF/RIS3; combined funding [Art.55(8) CPR]; support
outside of the OP-area [Art.60(2)CPR]; transnational
arrangements [Art.87(2)CPR]
BUT: How will auditors react?



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What are "synergies"?

- Synergies are **NOT** about substituting national / regional or private co-funding to Horizon2020 projects by ESIF money (but: amplify / carry further)
- Synergies are about obtaining more impacts on competitiveness, jobs and growth by combining ESIF and Horizon2020
- Synergies can be about bringing together Horizon2020 and ESIF money in a same project
- but accounting-, auditing- and organisation-wise it is easier to aim for synergies by successive projects that build on each other or parallel projects



Basic budgetary principles

1. **"non-cumulative principle"**: each action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the budget to any one beneficiary (Art 129 Financial Regulation). Art. 55(8) is a derogation for enabling joint support by ESIF and H2020 to the same project, but even under the derogations, double funding to the same cost item is prohibited.
2. **State Aid rules apply**
3. **Different solutions for different situations** for instance:
 - * **"mainstream" H2020 and ERDF projects via grants**: a cost item is a specific expenditure incurred and eligible in a project (e.g. proven by an invoice); then, in the same project, some expenditure may be co-funded under H2020 and other expenditure under ERDF. The importance is to organise from the beginning the accounting in a way that double funding for the same item is excluded.
 - * **ERA-Net (H2020)**: this "non-cumulative" principle is seen in a rather restrictive way. The cost item from a H2020 perspective is seen as the total eligible national budget devoted to a specific ERA-Net action (calls for proposals for funding many projects). In this case, national budget cannot include ERDF (EUREKA may offer a solution) ...



Need for better and more strategic coordination
on BOTH sides!

Now!

Structural Funds:

- **RIS3 development:** Include Horizon2020 actors (Researchers, members of the programme committee, EIPs, ETPs, EIT-KICs, PPPs (JTIs), MarieCurie centres, research institutions with success in FP7, EUREKA ...) ... and consult international networks (research AND business networks)
- **OP development:** open OPs for transnational activities (Art. 60(2) CPR, Art. 87(3) CPR etc.) and keep INTERREG on the radar to make the best out of the mainstream OP investments in R&I
- **Remember:** Do not focus on acquisition of additional funding from H2 for "normal" coop. research projects, but on what is the strategic aim of your RIS3 in terms of economic transformation and what you can influence (e.g. structuring measures: EUREKA, Financial Instruments, EIT-KICs, EEN, PPPs; capacity building: RI, networks, advisory services, industrial RI ...)



Need for better and more strategic coordination ...
on BOTH sides!

Horizon2020:

- Revisit interpretation of rules for H2 participation
- emphasize synergies issues in guidance to participants
- Align work programmes and EIP agendas to RIS3 fields of specialisation to maximise lever on ESIF
- Strengthen the collaboration of the NCPs with MA and regional structures of support
- Training for RTD, CNECT, ENTR, etc staff and external evaluators on synergies with ESIF
- Facilitate transfer of technology and research results from H2 (and FPs)
- Adapt participants portal & templates for proposals



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Key messages for clarifying & facilitating synergies

At policy level: The objective of Cohesion Policy is to improve the regional economy in terms of competitiveness, growth and jobs. Therefore, it can only support research projects contributing to this objective. It cannot support projects for "purely" scientific purposes.

At strategic / programme level: the authorities involved in designing RIS3 / PA / OPs should work together with authorities and bodies involved in designing research policies, e.g. National Roadmaps for research infrastructures (RIs) linked to the ESFRI Roadmap, in particular for facilitating access to industrial users and in the context of industrial clusters.

At project level: for using ERDF, Horizon2020 project managers should contact the ERDF Managing Authorities (MAs) to explain the impact on the regional economy (links with innovative industries, spin-offs, etc). Possible funding will depend on the regional priorities, budget planning, timing and procedures. If € 50 million +: indicative list has to be in OP.



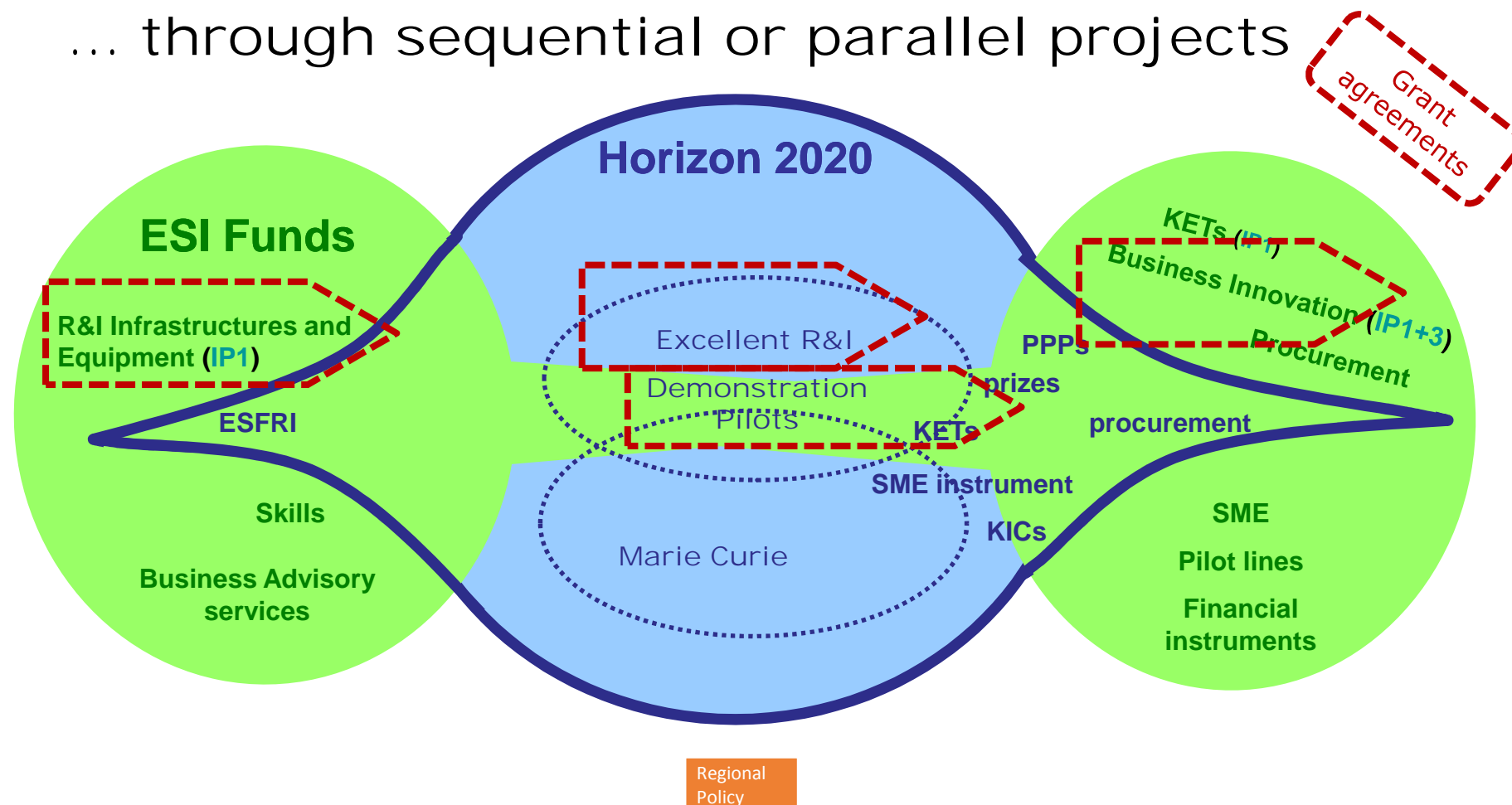
Different scenarios for synergies

1. **Combining "normal" H2020 & ESIF support** through sequential, parallel or joint projects
2. **Human resources & Mobility:** EIT-KICs, Marie Curie/COFUND, Erasmus for All, ERA Chairs
3. **R&I in and for SMEs:** H2020-SME instrument, COSME (EEN), Creative Europe (Culture/Media),
4. **Public-Public Partnerships and Transnational cooperation/coordination initiatives** : Joint Programming, ERA-NET, Art. 185 Initiatives, EUREKA/EuroStars, European Territorial Cooperation
5. **Research infrastructures:** ESFRI Roadmap, major ERDF projects, ERIC, EGTC
6. **Stimulation of demand:** pre-commercial public procurement, procurement of innovative solutions
7. **New forms of innovation support:** Prizes, social innovation, non-tech. innovation, European Innovation Partnerships

The guide spells many of them out, including the eligible cost and acceptable cost/expenditure item definitions for each

Combining "normal" H2020 projects with ESIF

... through sequential or parallel projects



**Horizon2020
evaluation
gives MA
a quality
guarantee**

Hypothetical Horizon2020 project proposal & budget structure

Project proposal for Horizon2020

Project description

Work packages (ideally geographically
attributable) or definition of
expenditure categories

Horizon2020
budget
Incl. public or
private co-
funding
... But no ESIF!

ESIF budget
Incl. public or
private co-funding
+ specifying which
OP will co-fund and
where
... But no H2!

Step 2

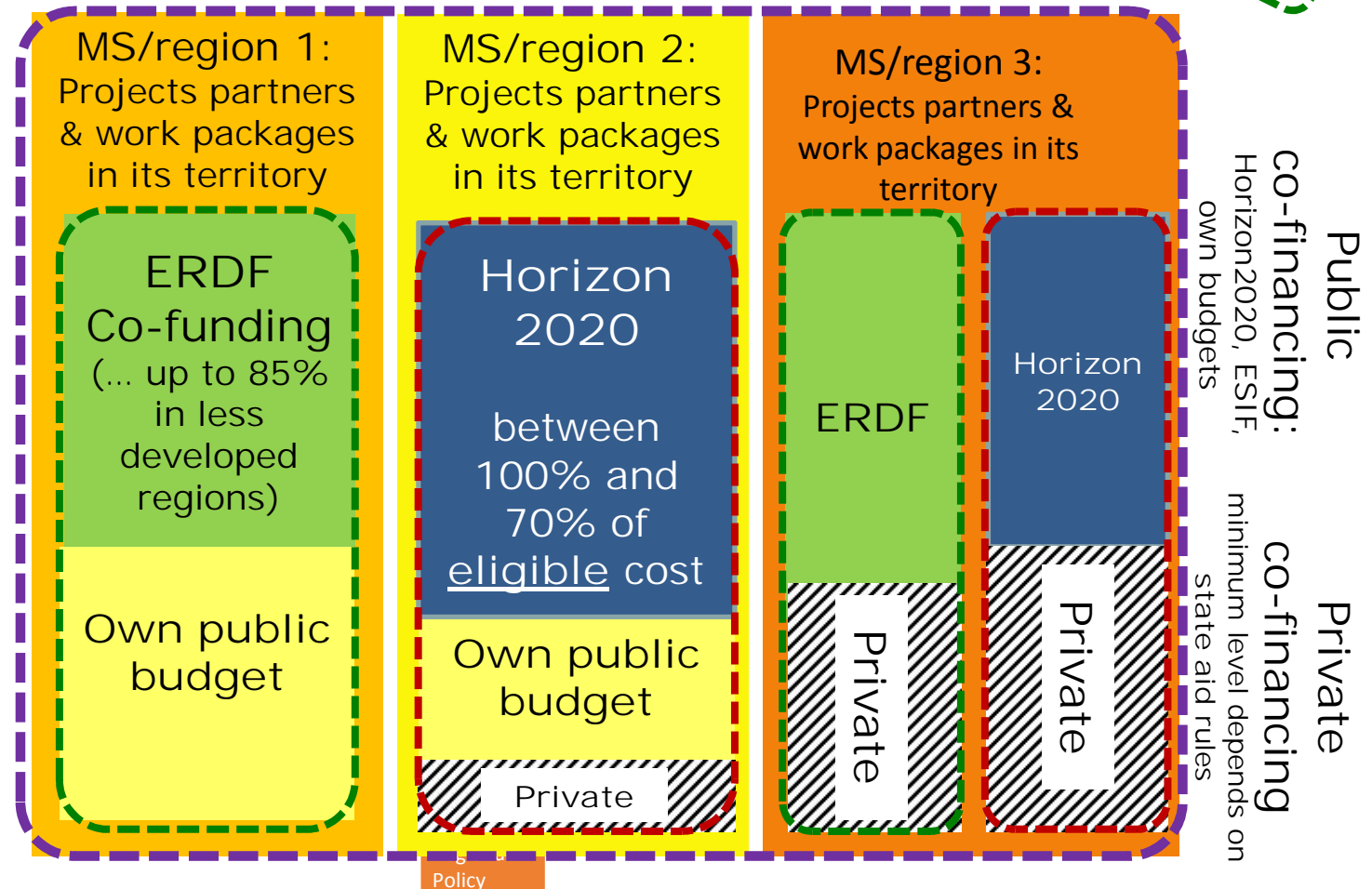
Horizon2020:
Evaluators look
into this to
appreciate the
scientific /
innovation
quality of the
entire project

... and negotiate
this part of the
budget

Step 1

ESIF MA: looks
into this part of
the budget and
checks the
eligibility of the
type of proposed
costs, the
location of the
operation, etc.
BEFORE the H2
project is
submitted to the
H2 call

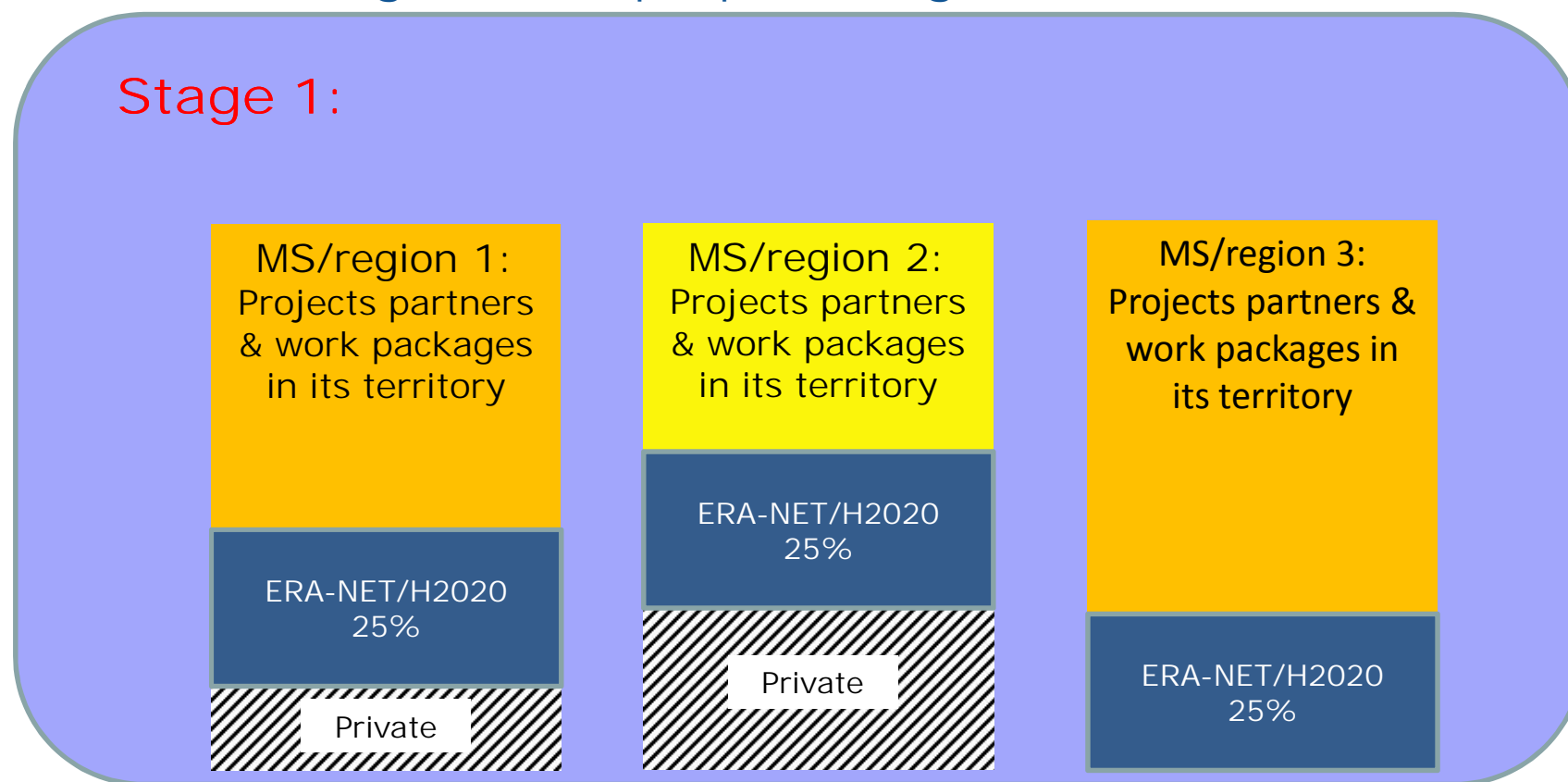
... and should
have a look into
the H2 project
content ... and
may wish to
make the ESIF
grant agreement
dependent on
the award of the
H2 project



Example 2: ERA-Net

Call with 2 stages and top-up funding and additional activities

Stage 1:



No combination at 1st stage: Member States implement a single call with Horizon2020 top-up funding (no ESIF!)

Cost item = entire ERA-Net (secretariat, organisation of call, co-funding of selected projects)

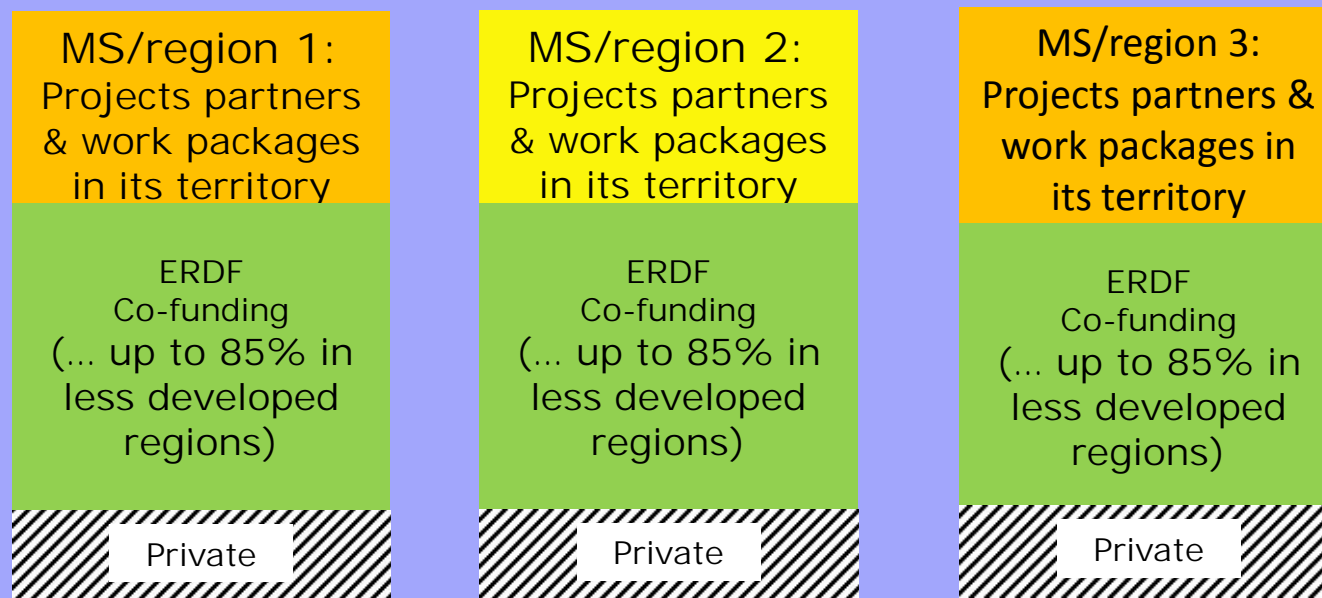


Example 2: ERA-Net

Call with 2 stages and top-up funding and additional activities

Stage 2: Possible combination ERDF / ERA-Net

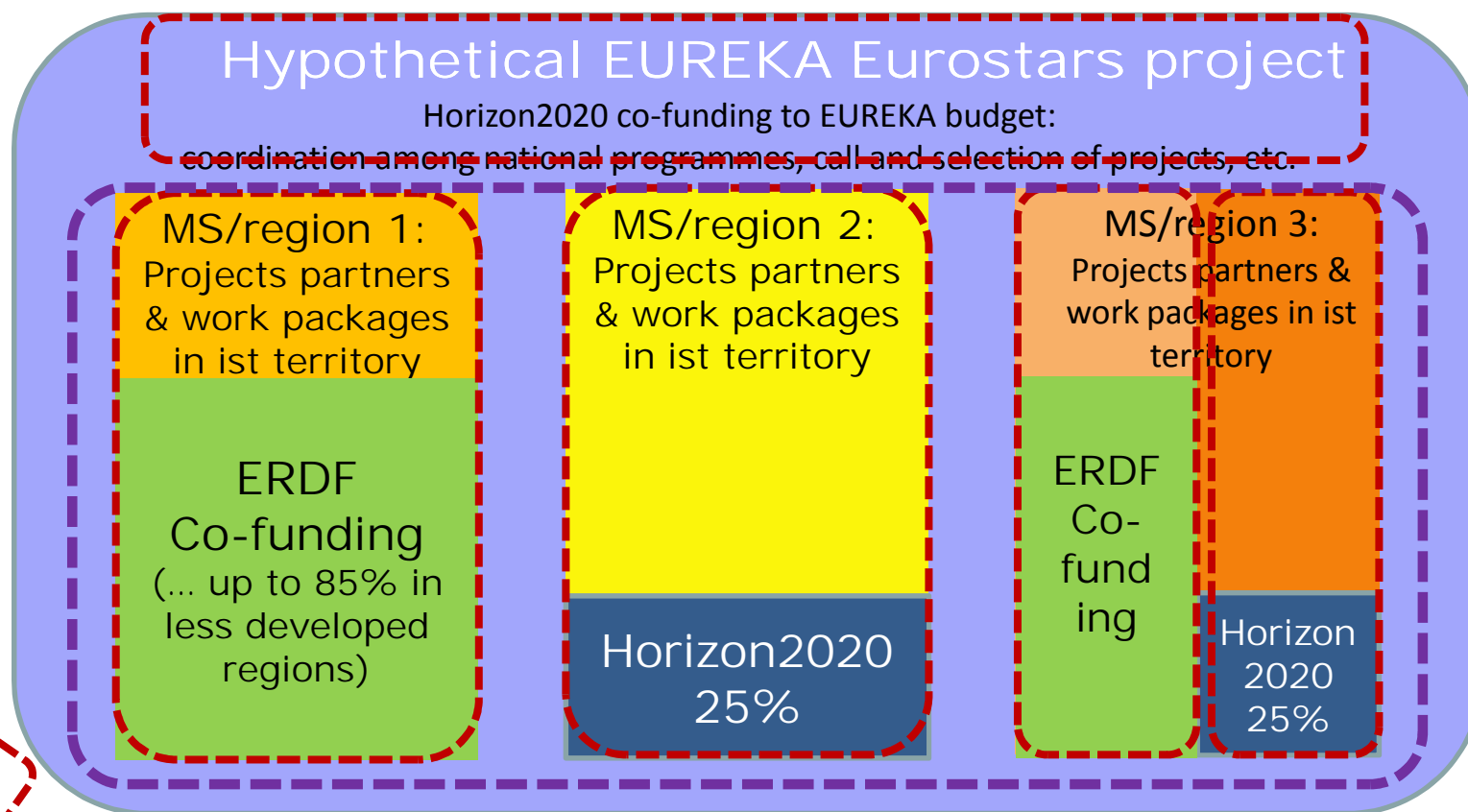
Building on Horizon 2020 ERA-Nets, MS/regions can have related activities and joint calls co-funded under ESIF
This enhances the impact for the local stakeholders, as the combination of Horizon2020 and ESIF money amplifies the opportunities for research and innovation



2nd stage: use Horizon2020 funded network to develop other joint activities, including calls for proposals for trans-national R&I projects, without Horizon2020 top-up funding under their responsibility (and possibly with ESIF co-funding in addition to their own funds)

Example 3: Different for EUREKA – Eurostars:

Project



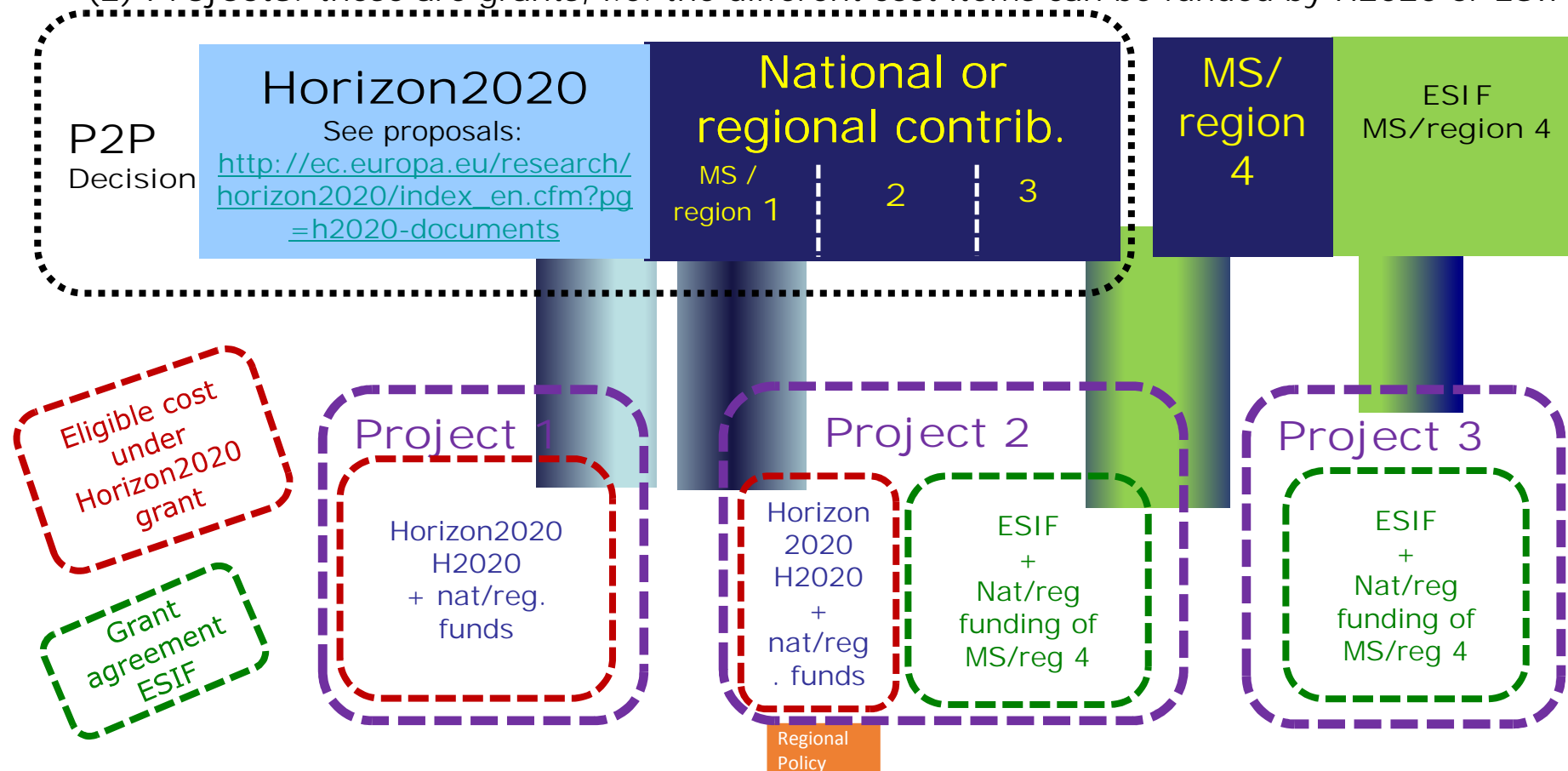
Possible structure of an EUREKA projects with 3 different MS and 4 parallel, but coordinated contracts. Such EUREKA projects could qualify as "operations" in the sense of Art. 55(8) CPR



Example 4: Hypothetical Horizon2020 Public-Public-Partnerships (Art. 185 TFEU)

There are 2 levels of legal agreements:

- (1) the Decision on the set-up of the P2P (this is no grant, but a programme contribution, i.e. the Art 55(8) CPR derogation does not apply and a combination of funds is not allowed)
- (2) Projects: these are grants, i.e. the different cost items can be funded by H2020 or ESIF

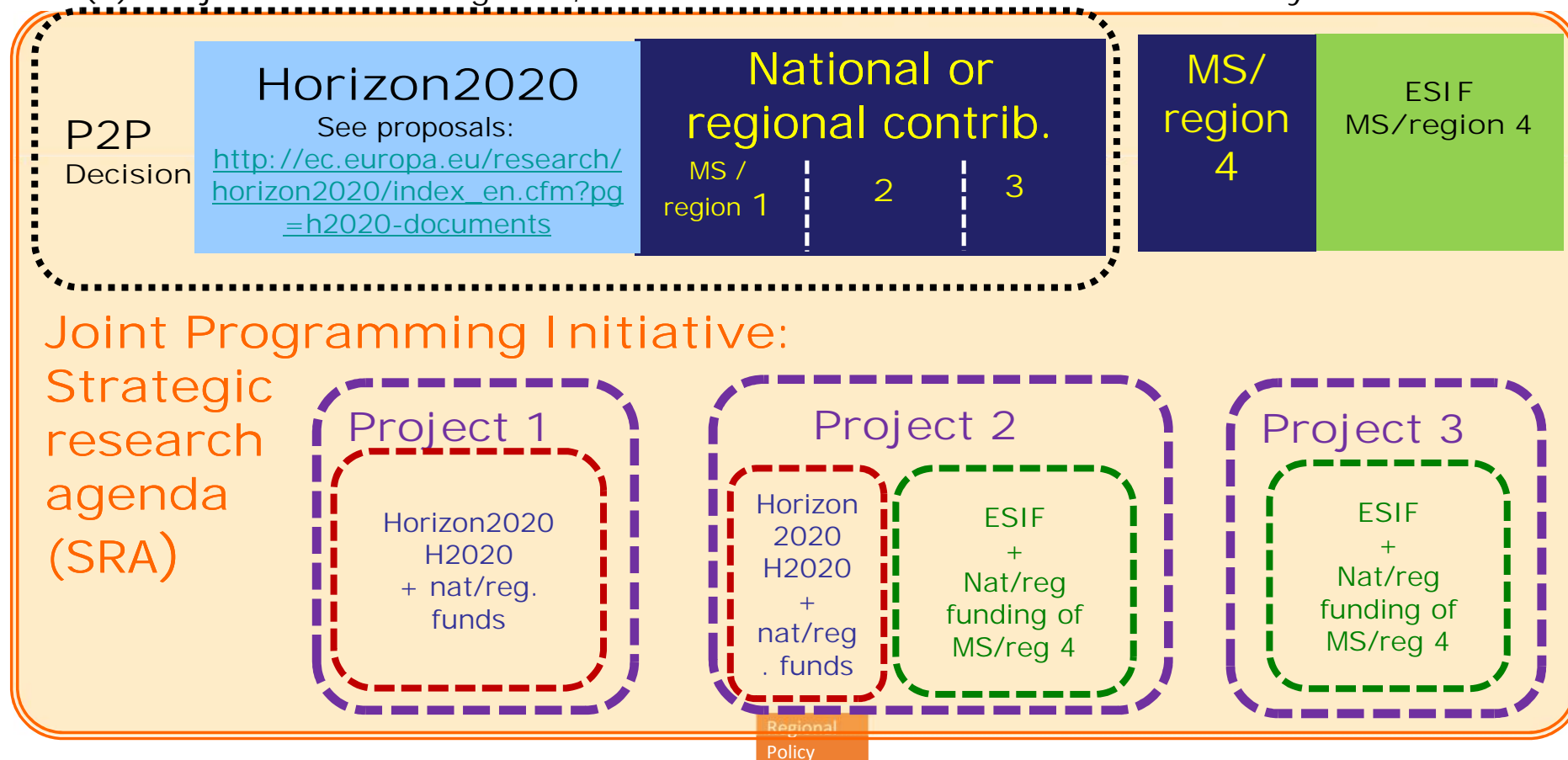




Example 4b: Hypothetical Horizon2020 Public-Public-Partnerships (Art. 185 TFEU)

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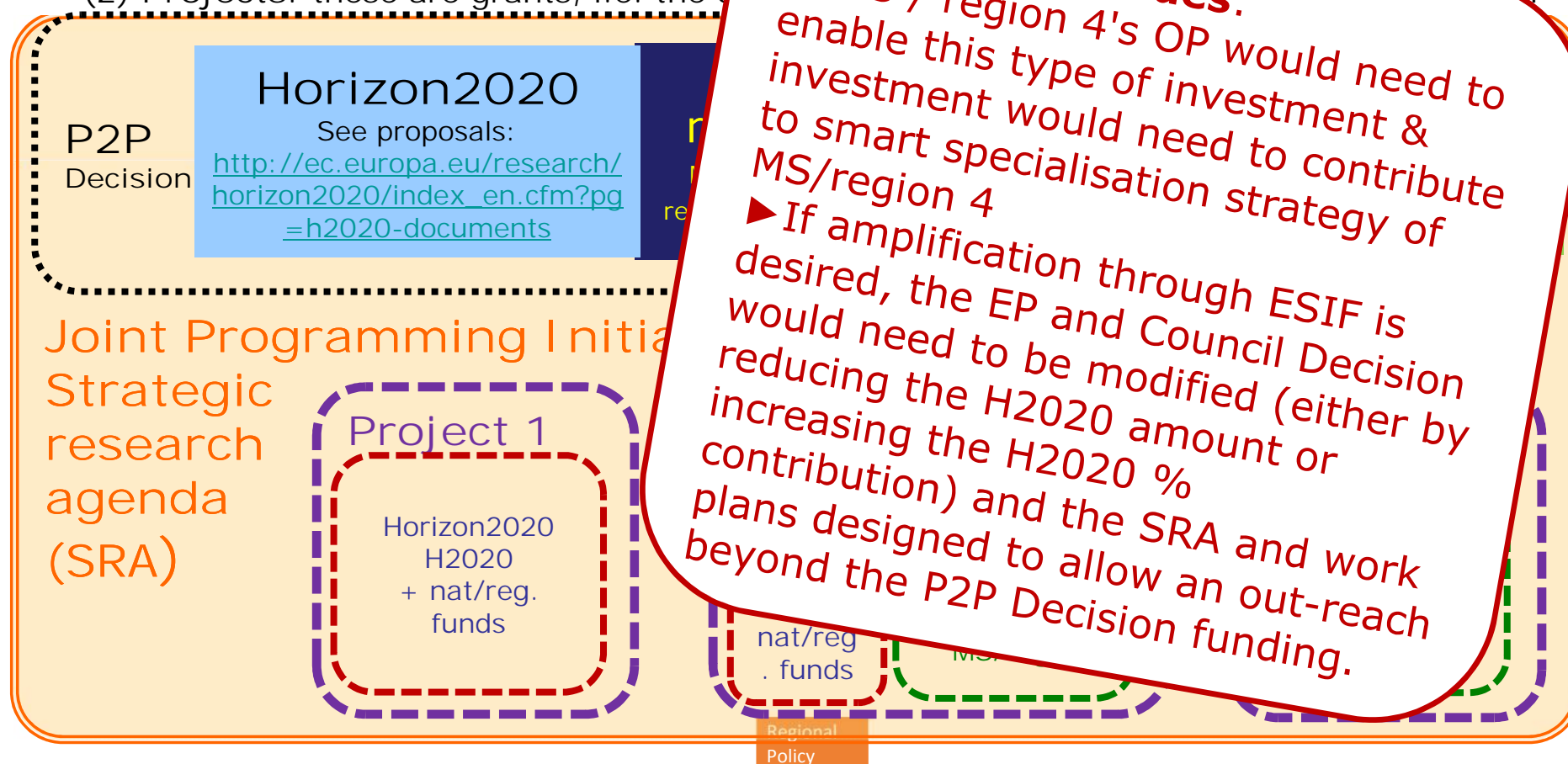




Example 4b: Hypothetical Horizon2020 Public-Public-Partnerships (Art. 185 TFEU)

There are 2 levels of legal agreements:

- (1) the Decision on the set-up of the P2P (not a programme contribution, i.e. the Art 55(8) CPR derogation does not apply, i.e. not allowed)
- (2) Projects: these are grants, i.e. the derogation applies, i.e. allowed



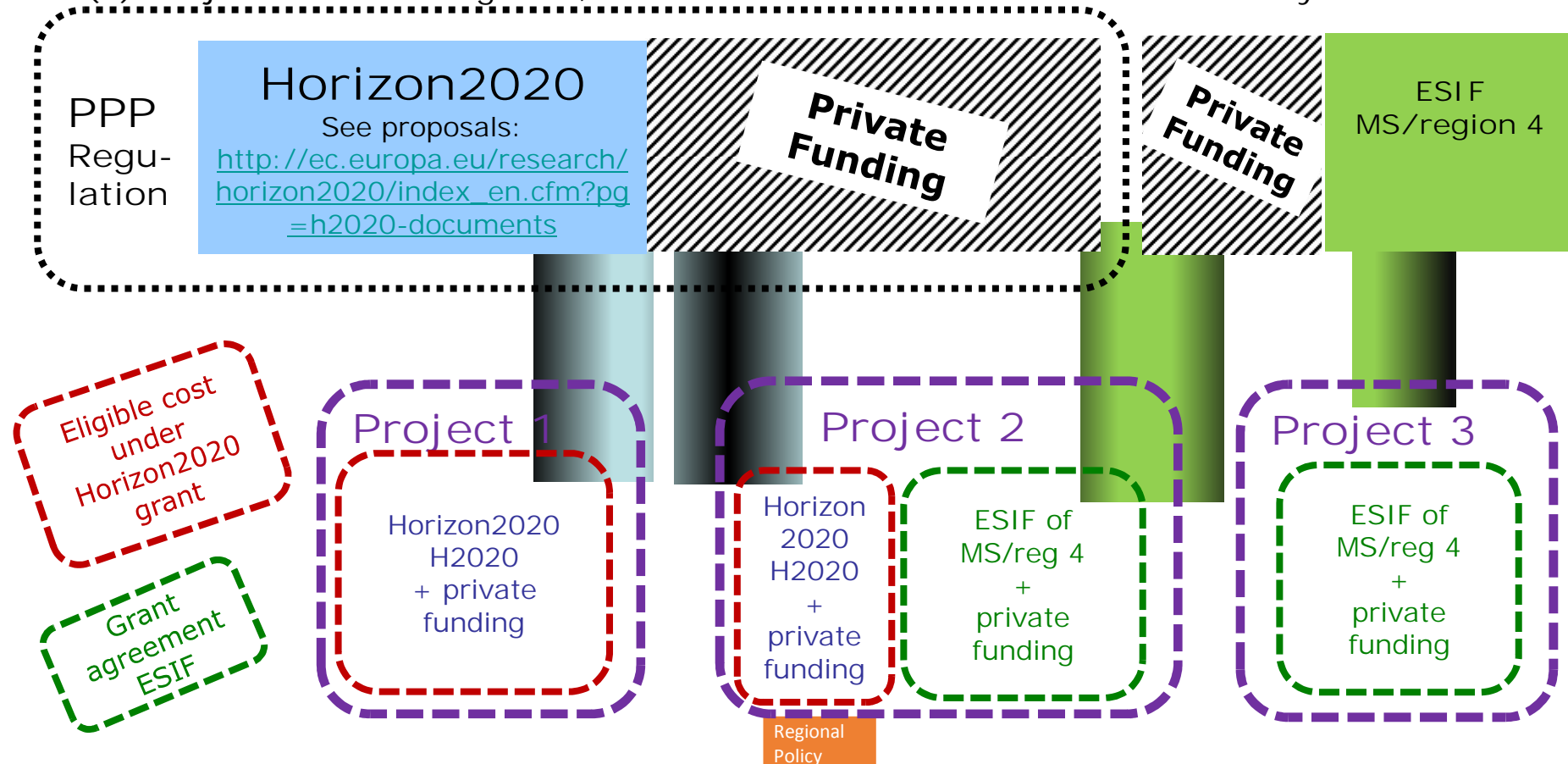


Comment:
Co-funding from purely private sources (i.e. no public contribution) to release ESIF funds is allowed under the ESIF regulations, but MS/regions have to foresee this **"full cost model"**

Example 5: Hypothetical Horizon2020 Public-Private Partnerships – JU/JTI (Art. 187 TFEU)

There are 2 levels of legal agreements:

- (1) Regulation on the set-up of the PPP / JTI (no grant, but a programme contribution, i.e. the Art 55(8) CPR derogation does not apply and a combination of funds is not allowed)
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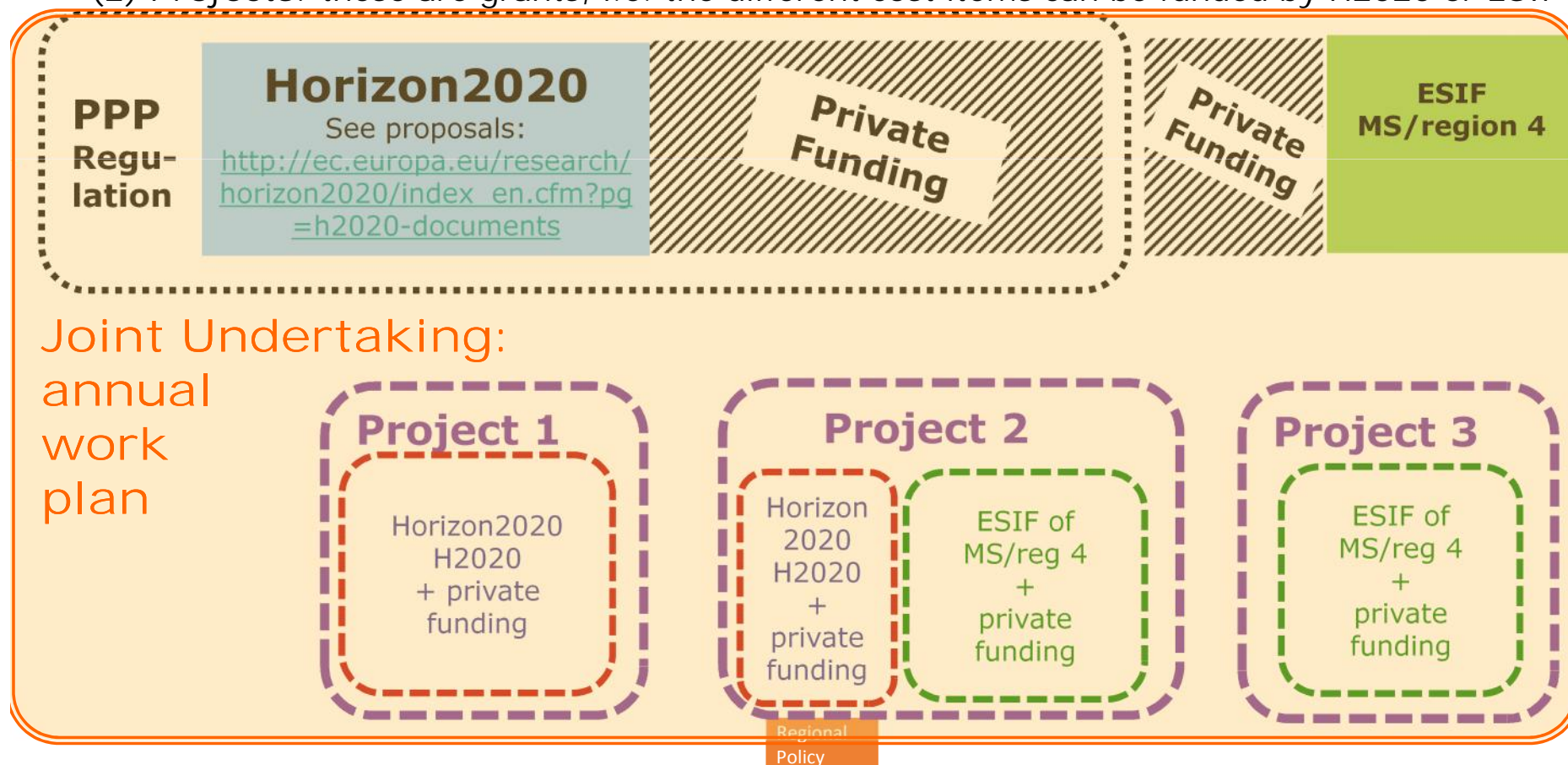




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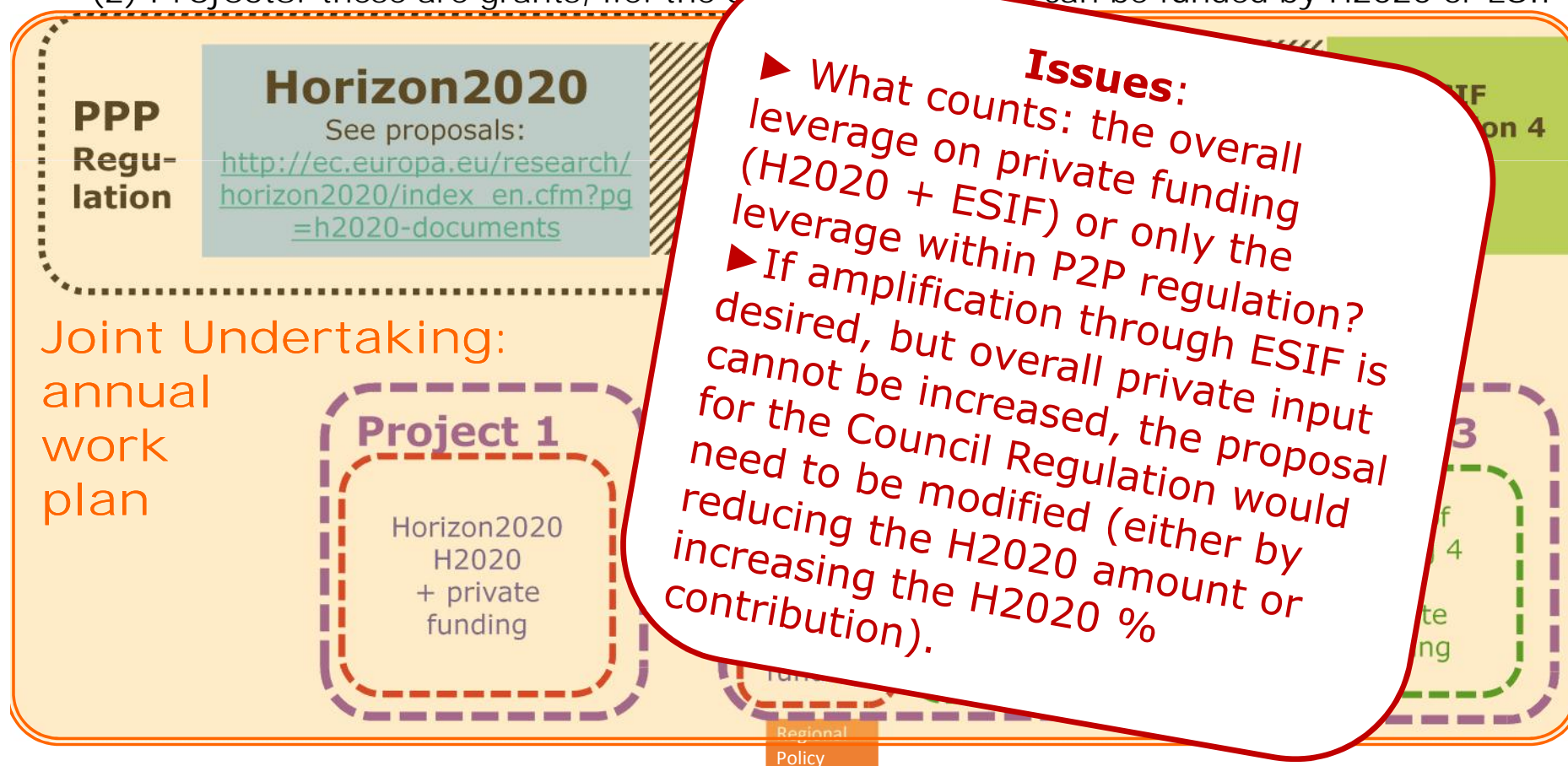




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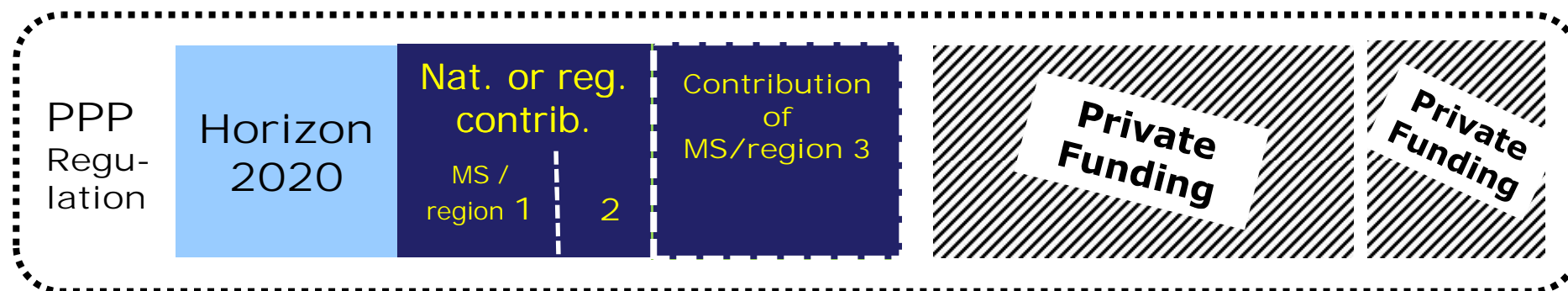


Example 5c: Hypothetical Horizon2020

ECSEL Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership (Art. 187 TFEU)

There are 2 levels of legal agreements:

- (1) Regulation on the set-up of ECSEL includes also a public contribution.
- (2) Projects: these are grants, i.e. the different cost items can be funded by H2020 or ESIF





Example 5c: Hypothetical Horizon2020

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**Not allowed according
to Art 129 Financial
Regulation!**



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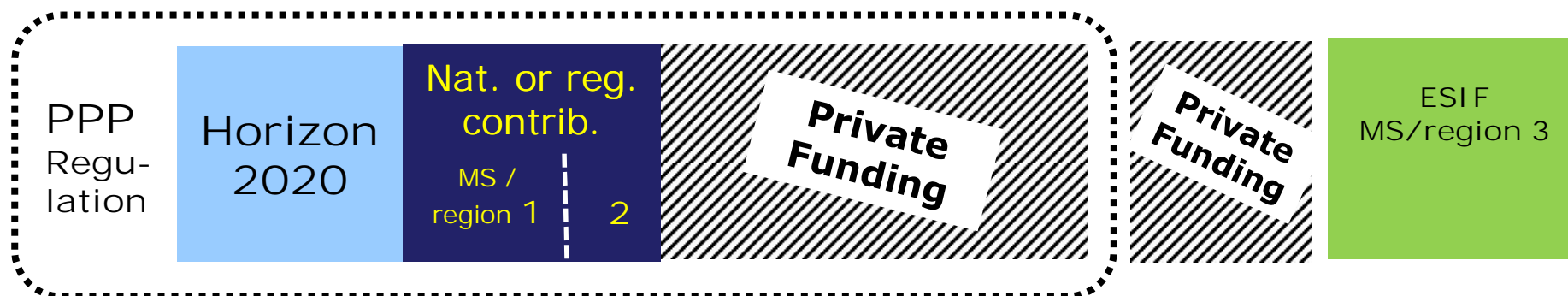


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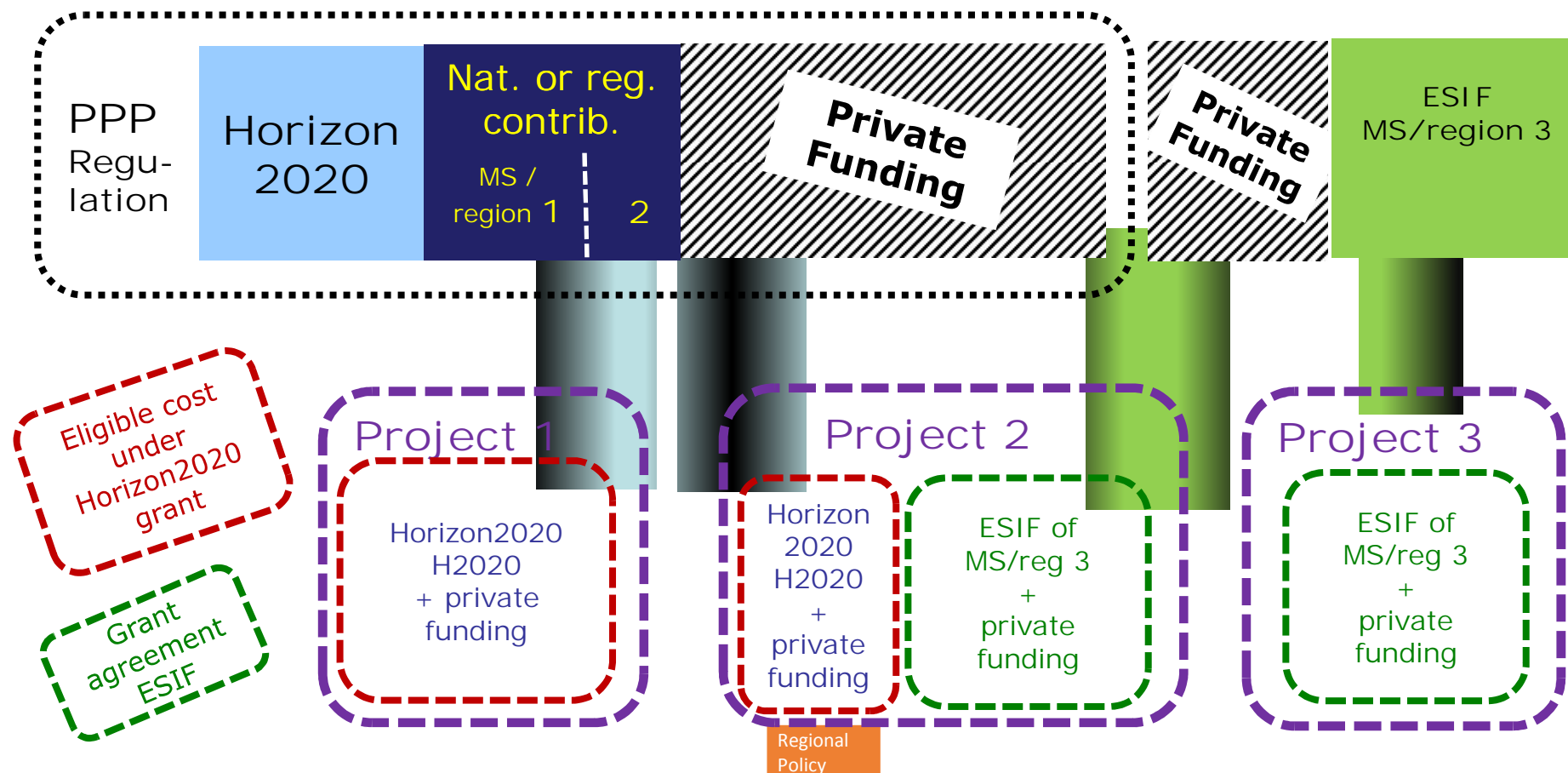


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Example 6: Smart Cities

... Building a pipeline for urban innovation...

Capacity building, networking, programme preparation to set up smart city investments

- Run at local, regional (e.g. URBACT) national, EU levels
- Different types of cooperation: PPPs etc, cities-cities, with academics, public services
- Bottom-up (needs-based) or top-down (20-20-20 and emission targets)

Smart Cities Lighthouses in H2020
brings cities + industry together

City1:
Projects
partners &
work
packages in
its territory

City 2:
Projects
partners &
work
packages in
its territory

City 3:
Projects partners
& work packages
in its territory

Pilot and demonstration phase

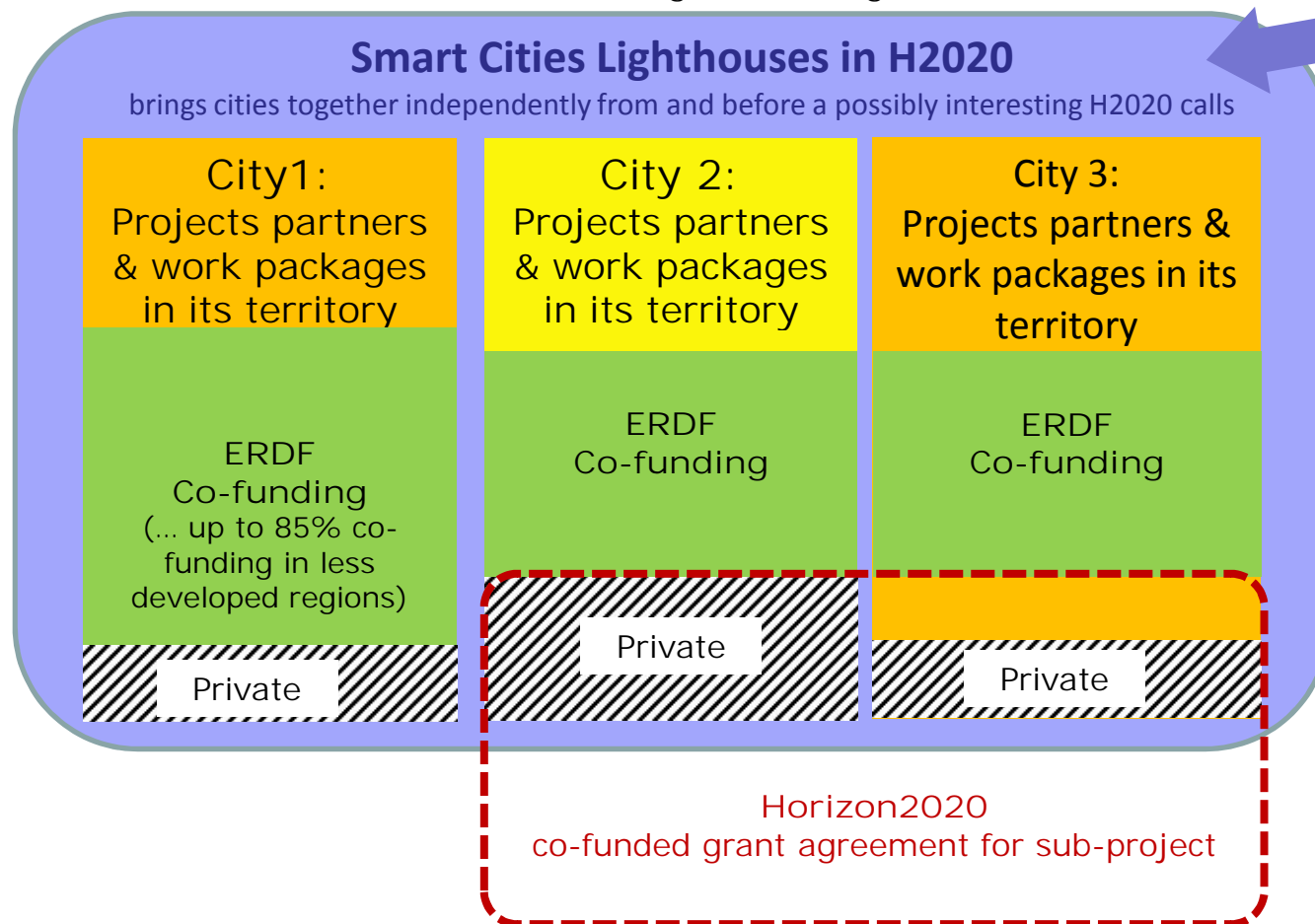
- Small and large pilots
- Run at local, regional, national, EU levels
- Different types of cooperation: PPPs etc
- Note: FP6 and FP7 project results are suitable, H2020 results arrive in 3 years

Replication of tested solutions in other cities, capacity building to set up smart city investments

- Run at local, regional (e.g. URBACT) national, EU levels
- Different types of cooperation: PPPs etc, cities-cities, with academics, public services
- Bottom-up (needs-based) or top-down (20-20-20 and emission targets)

Example 6: Smart Cities

... could also be a model for the macro-regional strategies' innovation funds ...



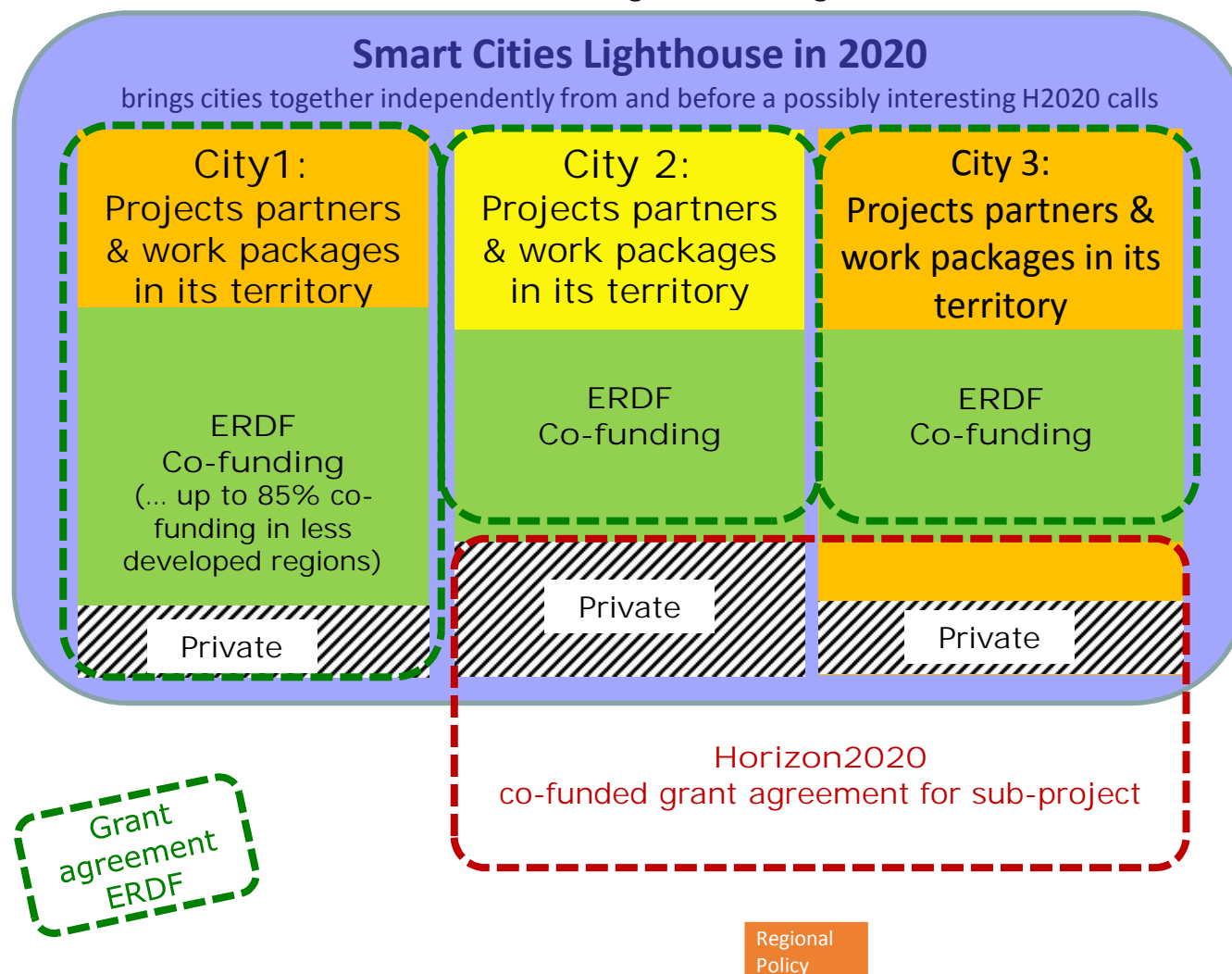
URBACT might facilitate the set-up of such initiatives ...

Issues to be watched:

- The 3 cities need to secure the ERDF funding independently and under the relevant OPs and rules.
- The launch of a suitable H2020 call at the right timing is not under the control of the cities and there is no guarantee to get the funding in the competitive award system of H2020.
- If an H2020 grant is awarded, the co-funding rates for the ERDF grants need to be adjusted (within the ESIF limits) to take account of the budgets that will be used for H2020 co-funding

Example 6: Smart Cities

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Towards a guide on synergies between EU funding sources for R&I

- **Coverage:** ESIF, Horizon2020, Erasmus+, COSME, Creative Europe, digital CEF, ...) **Excluded: Financial instruments** → will be dealt with in other working groups (ECFIN) and guidance documents
- **Participating DGs:**
 - Co-chair REGIO & RTD
 - CNECT, ENTR, BUDG, AGRI, EMPL, JRC, EAC, BEPA, ENER, ENV, MOVE
- **Approach:** follow the Horizon 2020 project /contract formats & present related ESIF intervention possibilities
- **Timetable:** Finalising of first draft (end of July) informal consultation of target groups (August/Sept.) formal ISC (Oct.) Publication (Nov.)
- **Status of the guide** To be clarified (non-paper no legal certainty or SWD binding for auditors etc.)



Structure of draft guide

Part 1: Combining EU Funding Sources – Principles and Rules

Part 2: Who should read this guide and why

Part 3: Identifying suitable forms of combination by policy objective and target group

Part 4 Scenarios for combining R+I funding sources: collaborative projects , ERA chair , Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND , EIT / KICs and ESIF, SME instrument, COSME, Research Infrastructures, Joint Programming, ERA-NET, Art. 185 initiatives, Art. 187 Joint Technology Initiatives, EUREKA/Eurostars, Pre-Commercial Procurement and Public Procurement for Innovation, ERASMUS+, Creative Europe, Social Innovation, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) digital services ... incl. Do's and don'ts & good practice examples

Part 5: How can combined funding be implemented? Recommendations for bodies in charge of programming and implementation of Structural Funds, Horizon2020 and other EU programmes, incl. coordination for information Flows & Channels for end beneficiaries

Part 6: FAQs

ANNEXES:

information on the different programmes, Legal and Background information, Summary of State Aid rules, Acronyms, Useful Documents and websites, Contacts for further information, [Financial Instruments – referral to other sources of guidance],

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Links and documents

- Common Provisions Regulation for the European Structural and Investment funds:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/proposals_2014_2020_en.cfm
- Horizon 2020 regulations and rules for participation:
- COSME regulation:
- Erasmus plus regulation:
- For 2007-13 period: Practical guide to EU funding opportunities for research and innovation: