

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

# **After Lisbon - the role of regional and local authorities in the new Strategy for Sustainable Growth and Better Jobs**

***LISBON MONITORING PLATFORM  
60 INTERVIEWS WITH POLITICIANS***

**The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives**

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# Executive Summary

In 2000, the EU launched its ambitious 'Lisbon Strategy' to become "the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010". After five years, the EU's leaders re-launched the strategy in March 2005, placing greater emphasis on growth and jobs and transferring more ownership to member states via national action plans.

A new European strategy for sustainable growth and better jobs will be launched when the Lisbon Strategy comes to an end in 2010, overcoming the failings of the Lisbon strategy over the last decade, among others the failure to take sufficient account of the EU's regions and cities as key partners.

A new plan, named 'EU 2020', was launched for consultation by the European Commission in November 2009, placing an emphasis on green growth and jobs through innovation. The consultation resulted in 1,500 submissions.

In the light of the decision on the future Strategy, 60 local and regional stakeholders from across the EU27 were interviewed about their experiences with implementing the Lisbon Strategy. The first group of interviewees were selected from among those members of the former CoR Lisbon Monitoring Platform who answered positively to the CoR's request to help monitor the Lisbon Strategy in specific thematic fields. Further interviewees were then chosen based on a random sample.

The Lisbon Monitoring Platform (LMP) was established in 2006 as a voluntary network of EU regions and cities to help the CoR monitor the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy on the ground. The "Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform" (EUROPE2020MP) is its successor.

The specific objective of this study was to provide the Committee of the Regions (CoR) with a document summarizing a series of interviews with LMP members (politicians, experts and practitioners) on their experiences in adopting the Lisbon Strategy; possible inconsistencies with their priorities; the local and regional policy tools best suited to pursue the Strategy; the benefits of adopting a multi-level governance approach, as well as their expectations regarding the CoR's post-Lisbon activities.

## How helpful has the Lisbon Strategy been for local and regional authorities?

#1. The Lisbon Strategy has **supported LRAs in the process of strategy development** and has given a strong delivery focus to operational programmes. It led to the identification of clearer targets (e.g. research target of 3%, targets in the energy sector). Overall, the strategy increased policy coherence between different administrative levels and has enabled rational choices between different investment objectives.

#2. The Lisbon Strategy has **established a framework for collaboration between different actors** operating at various administrative levels. It supported coordination between local and regional levels in particular.

#3. **For local authorities**, the Lisbon strategy has been helpful by creating and establishing a new way of thinking and a new mindset, in particular for city development and necessary structural changes. It has helped to raise the awareness of local authorities about specific topics (e.g. elaboration of a new cluster strategy, establishment of a comprehensive agenda, the concept of sustainable cities).

#4. In some cases, the Lisbon Strategy has **improved the links between national and regional policies** (vertical dimension) in so far as policies have become more 'intertwined': It has fostered dialogue, benchmarking practices and general interaction between LRAs from different countries. The LS is perceived as increasing the legitimacy of LRAs and has, in some cases, led to a change in the relationship between regions (horizontal dimension) by introducing stronger competition between the regions.

#5. In most cases, the Lisbon Strategy **has not led to a dramatic change in the role of LRAs**: The specific administrative systems of individual countries, their legal competences and administrative reforms are much more important factors in terms of the LRAs' role. Although the Lisbon strategy has not changed the relationship among actors it has nonetheless changed how certain priorities are coordinated.

#6. **The role of LRAs is still undervalued or marginal** in cases where National Reform Plans are managed in a very centralized manner. Moreover, local and regional levels faced a discrepancy between the objectives promoted by the Lisbon Strategy and the corresponding financial resources at their disposal. In operational terms it has been noted that the Strategy can limit the

‘degrees of freedom for LRAs (earmarking), and that in some areas regional authorities have become the executors of national/EU-policies.’

#7. In many cases the **Lisbon strategy has not succeeded in involving and mobilizing territorial actors**. In particular, the involvement of local authorities was rather modest and often limited to a formal role (consultation, monitoring etc.). Although the EU strategy has encouraged Member States to involve local actors and while there have been some efforts to do so during the design of the strategy, the effects have remained rather limited and poorly tangible in many cases.

#8. At local level, the Lisbon strategy suffered from an **awareness-gap** in so far as citizens were often familiar with the Lisbon topics without actually knowing much about the Strategy itself. This lack of visibility is also due to the fact that the ownership of the LS at higher administrative levels has not been convincing.

<b>Has there been any inconsistency between local/regional priorities and those set by the Lisbon Strategy?</b>
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#9. Overall the **local and regional priorities are considered to be consistent** with those set by the Lisbon Strategy. However, sometimes it is felt, that although there has been no inconsistency as such, the Lisbon strategy has not actually had a strong impact either: the strategy itself has not been a “huge topic” and the programmes defined their own priorities and measures independently of the EU Strategy.

#10. Overall, the Lisbon Strategy was perceived mostly as an **economic strategy and not as a regional development strategy**; comparable to a ‘high speed train connection’, which does not have any stops in small and medium sized cities. The Strategy concentrated on core-regions and failed to address regional needs in a more integrated manner.

#11. Inconsistencies and trade-offs were observed in terms of the relatively **low importance of the social and environmental dimensions** of economic growth. While the Strategy put great emphasis on competitiveness and macro-economic issues, the local conditions for attracting business were neglected.

#12. The **insufficient relationship between strategic goals and financial resources** hindered the implementation of the Lisbon goals. In some cases, the high allocation of funds did not cater to the basic needs of LRAs and resulted in

a missing local response. The monitoring of results was not always properly taken into account for financial re-allocation.

#13. **“Operational inconsistency”**: LRAs had problems in translating strategic objectives into action on the ground.

#14. The Lisbon Strategy has been **“far removed from realities on the ground”** – in terms of the actual needs of the territory and its people (especially in times of economic crisis). This is linked to the fact that aspects such as territory, social cohesion and employment were not sufficiently highlighted. Its responsiveness in reacting to exceptional situations such as the economic crisis has been low.

**Are there concrete examples where such inconsistencies had a negative effect on the delivery of the Lisbon strategy?**

#15. Several examples show that **LRAs have had little flexibility to use LS funds** to combat the rise of unemployment due to the global economic crisis or the collapse of industry.

#16. The ‘fragmented approach’ in EU strategies and funding makes it difficult for local and regional actors to overcome this sectoral approach on the ground.

#17. **The inconsistencies at operational level** are more important to LRAs than those existing at strategic level. The translation of the National Reform Programme to the local level was often not conducted in a formal and structured manner. The preparation of the progress reports for National Reform Programmes did not take sufficient account of regional and local partners.

**What were the main obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in LRAs**

#18. The **translation and further operability of the Lisbon Strategy** has been the main challenge for local and regional actors across all priorities. It proved challenging to translate the text of the Strategy itself into an action plan.

#19. The LS **did not lend itself to the mobilization of actors** at the local and regional levels (both public and private). To this end, it should have had fewer and clearer objectives, with clearly related actions for implementation over a set time frame. The strategy should further be capable of responding to new challenges (e.g. economic crisis, energy crisis etc.)

#20. **Missing competences, missing involvement of local and regional authorities** and administrative fragmentation have been an obstacle to the effective implementation of the LS.

#21. **A lack of commitment** from different government levels, and an unclear division of roles and responsibilities have had a negative impact on the achievements of the LS.

#22. Specific national obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of **research and innovation** include a non-receptive cultural atmosphere, general hostility against innovation, and the concentration of funds on infrastructures instead of a systematic innovation approach.

#23. Specific national obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of **energy** include the activities of national lobbies, which oppose the creation of a renewable energy sector, unfavourable national legislation on waste management and the environment as well as an unfavourable environment for small scale solutions.

<b>Which policy tools were most relevant to local and regional actors for achieving the Lisbon objectives?</b>
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#24. The policy tools that could help LRAs become more actively involved in the implementation of overarching EU strategies include **making the strategy more binding**, with a clearer **division of responsibilities**, clearer **guidelines** and communicable principles, and illustrative objectives to enable stakeholders to communicate the strategy more effectively. Better planning and monitoring tools as well as more autonomy for LRAs to implement the strategy would also increase visibility.

#25. **Formal competences** and **financing tools** are the most important instruments for local and regional authorities for achieving the objectives of overarching EU Strategies. Regarding financing, however, it is not only the amount but also the autonomy in spending that is relevant (a specific fund for local authorities would have been an interesting option for the LS).

#26. **Monitoring and evaluation** as tools to help achieve the LS reveal a mixed picture: on the one hand, these tools were an important element for involving LRAs and giving them feedback; on the other hand monitoring and evaluation were in many cases perceived as a disproportionate administrative burden (particularly in the case of small interventions). The benchmarking of regions was mentioned as an alternative to foster voluntary competition between regions to meet the targets.

#27. Some stakeholders from LRAs do not see the need to invent new tools but rather to **make existing tools more binding**.

#28. Policy tools for **knowledge exchange** (awareness raising actions, incentives, Lisbon Monitoring Platform etc.) helped Local and Regional Authorities to be more actively involved in the implementation of the Strategy.

#29. In the field of the **economy, innovation and cluster development** all LRA policy tools which are participatory and which foster technological transfer are relevant. These include financing tools in combination with innovative services for SMEs, support for networks and cluster activities as well as support for the unified research area.

#30. In the field of **environment and renewable energy** the tools are mainly developed at lower administrative levels. Consequently, there is no need for new instruments but for a stable framework (e.g. especially in the area of renewable energy sources). EU economic and financial aid also plays an important role.

**Under what conditions can an EU strategy such as the Lisbon Strategy be effectively delivered?**

#31. **Better coordination and a clear division of responsibilities** should be based on the process already begun with the LS. The EU level defines the basic objectives and the national level ensures the full participation of all government levels in the development and adoption of objectives. The EU could potentially be an external evaluator and disseminator of practices.

#32. **Strong vertical coordination** (across different administrative levels) ensures the implementation of the Strategy as well as the commitment of the stakeholders involved.

#33. A more **central role for the regions** gives them the opportunity to create favourable conditions for implementing EU strategies at lower administrative levels.

#34. By ensuring 'coordination between European institutions' the CoR has a specific role to play in policy formulation and needs to ensure the **involvement of not only local and regional representatives, but also of the technical actors** concerned with implementation tasks.

#35. **Coordination in the field of innovation** is particularly challenging as multiple actors are involved from different institutions and levels of

administration. Clear roles and responsibilities are needed to ensure coordination.

#36. The creation of a suitable environment for the successful implementation of such a strategy means that every stakeholder must have a **specific role and objectives**. Moreover, a broad consensus is needed regarding the key priorities.

**Are there any good examples that show how LRAs have been effectively involved in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in your region/sector?**

#37. Examples of good practices **involving LRAs in the field of innovation and economy** include the process of preparing the regional innovation strategy in the Czech Republic, the Catalan National Pact for Research and Innovation, the thematic platforms of the "Local Programme fostering Research and Innovation" of the Piedmont region as well as the overall Structural Funds 'Lisbonization'.

#38. Good practices **involving LRAs in the field in renewable energy and environment** include activities in the area of sustainable urban development (including water management, connections between green areas, urban planning) in the city of Lodz, as well as the cooperation framework to promote discourse on social and environmental promotion in Sweden.

#39. Good practices involving **LRAs in social fields** include activities to connect schools to the internet in the Slovak Republic, as well as the Austrian "Learning Region" Working Group which was set up at regional level to join forces with and to strengthen synergies between the various regional players.

**How well developed is multi-level governance for the implementation of overarching EU Strategies (such as the Lisbon Strategy, Europe 2020 etc.) and what are the related problems ?**

#40. In many cases, the **approach used for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy** has been described as clearly top-down.

#41. In some cases (Greece, Poland etc.) the **national context for the implementation of overarching strategies is currently changing** in so far as either administrative reforms are ongoing or the country is still in the process of refining its governance system.

#42. LRAs are facing a number of **problems when trying to adopt a multi-level-governance** approach for implementing EU Strategies, such as a lack of awareness among key actors, a “centralized mindset” and rigid approaches that prevent dialogue.

#43. While **multi-level governance has become commonplace** for EU funding, it does however require time, openness to the participation of LRAs as well as appropriate coordination mechanisms for LRAs.

**What do LRAs need to play a greater role in the implementation of overarching EU Strategies?**

#44. **More competences** for LRAs and different rules at EU/national levels enabling the more consistent allocation of duties and responsibilities are needed.

#45. LRAs need **better recognition at all administrative levels** and stronger involvement in all phases of the policy cycle (policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)

#46. LRAs need **more incentives, funds and resources** (know-how, specialists etc) to pursue the goals of EU strategies more autonomously and effectively.

#47. **More participation and bottom-up activities** from LRAs as well as from other interested actors are needed to broaden the overall commitment to EU strategies.

**What needs to be done to strengthen the MLG approach in the implementation of EU Strategies?**

#48. **More communication dissemination and awareness-raising** on EU Strategies is needed to make these activities known to a wider public.

#49. A better and **more targeted flow of relevant information** to the key actors should be achieved by appropriate instruments e.g. by setting up a contact point in each country or by ensuring the flow of information between the different governance structures (e.g. regional management).

#50. **More coordination activities and structures** (more links between the actors, more arenas for debate) need to be created to provide access and coordination points for LRAs.

**What kind of post-Lisbon activities do you expect from the Committee of the Regions in future?**

**#51. Local and Regional Authorities expect the Committee of the Regions** to ensure their active participation and full involvement in future EU strategies, to support the decentralization process and to facilitate networking and a focused exchange of practices. While training for LRAs could be an option, stronger involvement in monitoring and a structured and critical reflection on the achievements of EU strategies would also be welcomed.



# 1 Introduction

The specific objective of this study is to provide the Committee of the Regions (CoR) with a document summarizing a series of interviews with politicians, experts and practitioners starting with a sample of the member authorities of the Lisbon Monitoring Platform. These members include those participating in the four LMP working groups set up in 2008 in accordance with the four Council Priorities for the Lisbon Strategy:

- 1) Innovation and Research,
- 2) SMEs, better regulation,
- 3) Human Resources, including labour markets,
- 4) Energy and Environment.

The interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire and focused on issues relevant to the design of the priorities, objectives and governance system of the new strategy.

The following issues were dealt with, among others:

- the policy tools best suited to pursue the Strategy's priorities and objectives, as set by the European Council for 2006-2010;
- the extent to which, and the policy domains in which, local and regional policymaking experienced inconsistencies between their priorities/objectives/agenda and those set by their countries' National Reform Programmes and/or by the Community Lisbon Programme;
- the benefits of adopting, as well as the disadvantages of not adopting, a multi-level governance approach;
- how the policy goals and tools related to the Lisbon Strategy are performing in the context of the current economic crisis.



## 2 Background: The Lisbon Strategy and the EU2020 Strategy

In 2000, the EU launched its ambitious 'Lisbon Strategy' to become "the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010". Five years later, the EU's leaders re-launched the strategy in March 2005, placing greater emphasis on growth and jobs and transferring more ownership to member states via national action plans.

A new European strategy for sustainable growth and better jobs will be launched after the Lisbon Strategy comes to an end in 2010, to overcome the failings of the Lisbon strategy over the last decade, among others the failure to take sufficient account of EU regions and cities as key partners.

A new plan, named 'EU 2020', was launched for consultation by the European Commission in November 2009 placing an emphasis on green growth and jobs through innovation. The consultation resulted in 1,500 submissions.

In the light of the decision on the future of the Growth and Jobs Strategy beyond 2010, the CoR has launched a series of own activities which are presented in the following overview-table:

Date	Selected activities related to Lisbon and EU2020 Strategy
7 October 2008	LMP Day at Open Days 2008: Two workshops organized by the LMP
November 2008	Adoption of the CoR Opinion on the Lisbon Strategy
Jan-Feb 2009	Fourth Territorial Dialogue Conference for Growth and Jobs
Feb. 2009	LMP 2009 Workshop: Reshaping The Lisbon Strategy After 2010
Spring 2009	CoR assess 27 National Progress Reports
May 2009	Consultation of the EU local and regional authorities on Lisbon Strategy concluded
End of 2009	CoR Own Initiative Opinion to be adopted
24 Nov. 2009	European Commission launches consultation on 'EU 2020' strategy
10-11 Dec. 2009	EU summit reviews priorities for EU 2020 strategy

15 Jan. 2010	Deadline for feedback on consultation
11 Feb. 2010	EU summit agrees direction for 'Europe 2020'
March 2010	EC presents 'Europe 2020' proposal
25-26 March 2010	European Council agrees on key targets of the new strategy
17-18 June 2010	EU summit adopts country-specific targets, Integrated Guidelines for National Reform Plan and time-line for reporting process

The **Lisbon Monitoring Platform** (LMP) was established in 2006 as a voluntary network of EU regions and cities to help the CoR monitor the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy on the ground. **The “Europe 2020 Monitoring Platform”** (EUROPE2020MP)<sup>1</sup> is the successor to the CoR's Lisbon Monitoring Platform (LMP) and follows the design and implementation of the strategy at the regional and local levels. It enables local and regional authorities to participate in the policy process from the design to the implementation of the new Europe 2020 strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://portal.cor.europa.eu/europe2020/Pages/welcome.aspx>

## 3 Interview results

The following findings are based on the transcriptions of 60 interviews held with local and regional stakeholders from across the EU27 to examine their experiences and opinions regarding the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. The interviews were carried out in the form of telephone interviews between November 2009 and July 2010.

In order to ensure anonymity, the following codes were used to indicate the country of origin, thematic orientation and administrative level of each respondent.

1. Country code (AT / BE....)
2. A thematic pillar indicating the interviewee's main area of expertise (ECO... economic, innovation / ENV... environmental, energy / SOC... social / HOR... horizontal)
3. The respondent's administrative level (LOC... local / REG... regional)

The findings are grouped into 4 sections and are summarized under several guiding questions (which were also used for the interviews).

### 3.1 Local coherence and trade-offs with EU Strategies

#### 3.1.1 How helpful has the Lisbon Strategy been for local and regional authorities?

**#1. The Lisbon Strategy has supported LRAs in the process of strategy development and has given a strong delivery focus to operational programmes. It has led to the identification of clearer targets (e.g. research target of 3%, targets in the energy sector). Overall, the strategy has increased policy coherence between different administrative levels and has enabled rational choices between different investment objectives.**

The LS has [...] **supported a process of strategy development at meso-level** (e.g. between Länder and local level); the key aspects of an economically and environmentally sustainable strategy have been made more prominent and the LS has supported a change of mindset among local opinion leaders in support of new policy approaches. (AT/ HOR REG)

The Lisbon agenda has **provided the central focus for the programme** for Cornwall and thus links across the 4 delivery functions. It has helped to shape the objectives of the programme, and to define those activities which form the

delivery focus. It has enabled rational choices to be made between different investment objectives. (UK/ ECL REG)

The strategy has been **helpful in terms of orientation with the targets set at EU level** e.g. the target for research was 3% set by the Lisbon strategy and we work to that. (AT/ ECO REG)

The Lisbon Strategy has been very helpful in Bavaria with regard to the **orientation of economic policy** and the fields of innovation and R&D. (DE/ ECO REG)

**#2. The Lisbon Strategy has established a framework for the collaboration of different actors operating at various administrative levels. It has in particular supported coordination between local and regional levels.**

It **establishes a framework with guidelines and objectives which are largely agreed among the participants** and which the various actors operating at all levels need to adapt their priorities and activities to. (ES/ ECO REG)

The Lisbon Strategy is indeed a useful tool; it **established the strategic reference framework within which all actors** need to develop their roles and activities. (ES/ ECO REG)

**#3. For local authorities, the Lisbon strategy has been helpful in creating and establishing a new way of thinking and a new mindset, particularly for city development and necessary structural changes. It has helped to raise the awareness of local authorities about specific topics (e.g. elaboration of a new cluster strategy, establishment of a comprehensive agenda, and the concept of sustainable cities).**

The Lisbon Strategy was **helpful in creating and establishing a new way of thinking and a new mindset**. They have fully endorsed it in the development of Lodz. It is quite positive; thanks to such a strategy [...] the authorities have acquired a new awareness. It has helped by creating a new idea of a city including new disciplines such as sustainability which are fundamental for development and growth. (PL/ ECO LOC)

The **establishment of a comprehensive agenda** was also a very useful tool for LRAs. [...] the **concept of sustainable cities** lies at the heart of sustainability and thanks to the Strategy it has been put into greater perspective and there is

now more awareness of the issue. In the past, citizens had been conscious of this issue but it was not supported much by the institutions. (SE/ SOC LOC)

It was undoubtedly **helpful for raising the decision makers' awareness** about the structural changes necessary and the ongoing trends of the European economy. It provided a number of tools to help change the way of life in rural areas. (RO/ ECO LOC)

**#4. In some cases, the Lisbon Strategy improved links between national and regional policies (vertical dimension) in so far as policies became more 'intertwined': It fostered dialogue, benchmarking practices and general interaction between LRAs from different countries. The LS is perceived as increasing the legitimacy of LRAs and has in some cases led to a change in the relationships between regions (horizontal dimension) by introducing stronger competition between the regions.**

The relationship with the national/regional level is changing: We have noted **better coordination between LRA and national level in the preparation of regional strategic documents**. Several working groups focus on LS oriented topics (although it should be stressed that these topics are mostly not seen as LS topics but as actually solved problems). On the other hand, we could argue that the LS' ideas were genuinely taken on board by the LRAs. (CZ/ ECO REG)

Positive change: national and regional **policies have become more 'intertwined'**. (NL/ ECO REG)

The relationship was changed in terms of positive competitiveness and **competition between regions**, mainly in economics, research, quality of education and life, culture and the environment. (SK/ ENV REG)

The LS **increases the legitimacy level of LRAs and their recognition**. Moreover, such strategies foster dialogue, benchmarking practices and general interaction and sharing between LRAs from different countries. (IT/ ECO REG)

**#5. In most cases, the Lisbon Strategy has not led to a dramatic change in the role of LRAs: The specific administrative system of individual countries, their legal competences and administrative reforms are much more important factors in terms of the LRAs' role. Although the Lisbon strategy has not changed the relationship among actors it has nonetheless changed how certain priorities are coordinated.**

**Very small changes** in the relationship at local and regional level as the National Reform Plan (PNR) was managed in a very centralized manner. (ES/ ECO REG), (FR/ ECO REG), (HU/ ECO REG), (IT/ ECO REG), (IT/ ECO REG)

No changes in the relationship at national level since Sweden has a specific system whereby the Regions are responsible for health and transport. The **Lisbon strategy has changed how some priorities are coordinated** but not the actual relationship among agents. (SE/ SOC LOC)

The **strategy tries to give more power to the regional and local levels** but the government has not followed through with this. The government does not delegate. Thus the goals of the strategy, as well as its economic and social goals, are in the hands of the government. Furthermore, the goals of the Lisbon strategy have not been achieved. (MT/ HOR LOC)

**#6. The role of the LRAs is still undervalued or marginal in cases where National Reform Plans are managed in a very centralized manner. Moreover, local and regional levels faced a discrepancy between the objectives promoted by the Lisbon Strategy and the corresponding financial resources at their disposal. In operational terms, it has been noted that the Strategy can limit the 'degrees of freedom' for LRAs (earmarking) and that in some areas regional authorities have become the executors of national/EU-policies.**

Nothing has changed for the LRAs; their **importance is still undervalued** and their **role is still very marginal**. [...] there is an evident discrepancy between the objectives promoted and the corresponding financial resources. Such incoherence is evident especially in the relationship between State and Region. (ES/ ECO REG)

Poland is currently undergoing a massive infrastructural construction phase. This means that **changes to the roles of public agents have been planned** but

have not yet been implemented. Some changes have come due to reforms such as the clusterization process, but the majority of such changes will come in the future and agents have a positive perception of these upcoming changes. (PL/ ECO LOC)

On a somewhat negative note, the regional authorities have become the **executor of national/EU-policies** [...] [The LS] **can limit the 'degrees of freedom' for LRAs** (60% of our ERDF-budgets have been earmarked for 'Lisbon'). (NL/ ECO REG)

**#7. In many cases, the Lisbon strategy has not succeeded in involving and mobilizing territorial actors. In particular, the involvement of local authorities was rather modest and often limited to a formal role (consultation, monitoring etc.). Although the EU strategy encouraged Member States to involve local actors and while there had been some efforts to do so during the design of the strategy, the effects remained limited and poorly tangible in many cases.**

Such strategies usually **consider the local actors' role as more of a formality** than a reality [...]. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**The Strategy has not been a real priority for LRAs** in Greece for a number of reasons: there was no provision for the involvement of LRAs in operational terms; the official text did call for their involvement but it is not clear how this would actually work in operational terms. Consequently, the strategy was more at the disposal of national authorities. (GR/ HOR LOC)

The Lisbon monitoring process has allowed the local and regional authorities to **get acquainted with the Lisbon strategy**. But, in practice, outside of this action, the Lisbon Strategy has **failed to involve and mobilize the institutional actors in the regions**. (FR/ ECO REG)

**#8. At local level, the Lisbon strategy suffered from an awareness-gap in so far as citizens were often familiar with the Lisbon topics without actually knowing much about the Strategy itself. This lack of visibility is also due to the fact that the ownership of the LS at higher administrative levels has not been convincing.**

We have tried to **explain the priorities of Lisbon in cities and regions** throughout Slovenia but most of our authorities do not actually recognize that the defined priorities are part of an EU wide strategy. (SI/ HOR LOC)

In my experience I have often dealt with citizens who were **familiar with the Lisbon topics** without knowing about the Strategy itself. (SE/ SOC LOC)

Firstly, all politicians know about the strategy. This is a good point. But **the further down you go, the less people are aware**. The Strategy did not reach LRA level in Malta. Malta is a centralized country and thus the Strategy reached LRAs only very indirectly. (MT /HOR LOC)

### **3.1.2 Has there been any inconsistency between local/regional priorities and those set by the Lisbon Strategy?**

**#9. Overall, the local and regional priorities are considered to be consistent with those set by the Lisbon Strategy. However, sometimes it is felt, that while there has been no inconsistency, the Lisbon strategy has not had a strong impact either: the strategy itself has not been a “huge topic” and the programmes defined their own priorities and measures independently of the EU Strategy.**

From the perspective of a communications and PR expert, the Lisbon strategy has been a helpful tool because all the “things to do” are somehow now placed “under one roof”. On the other hand, the **Lisbon strategy is not a “huge topic”** here in our programme. We have our priorities which are also **coherent with the strategy** but they are not called “Lisbon priorities”. (UK/ HOR REG)

The Lisbon strategy with its objectives of ‘growth, employment and competitiveness’ is broadly in line with our own goals in the Graz-Maribor network. But, this type of cooperation also defines its own priorities and measures, independently of an EU strategy such as the Lisbon Strategy. So, while there is **no inconsistency as such Lisbon has not had a strong influence either**. (AT / HOR REG)

**Local and regional priorities were not different** to those of the Lisbon strategy as they were all designed against the background of the broad guidelines and trends (e.g. globalisation, demographic change etc.). However, it was not well known among LRAs, who definitely had a different order of priorities. (GR/ HOR LOC)

**The Lisbon strategy does not define any concrete measures and objectives.** It is difficult to “find yourself” in the strategy, especially in an Interreg programme with 6 participating Member States. In general, everybody wants

something different and everything is or was somehow a priority for the Lisbon strategy. (DE/ HOR REG)

**#10. Overall the Lisbon Strategy was perceived mostly as an economic strategy and not as a regional development strategy; comparable to a 'high speed train connection', that does not have any stops in small and medium sized cities. The Strategy concentrated on core-regions and failed to address regional needs in a more integrated way.**

The Lisbon Strategy was **perceived mostly as an economic strategy** and not as a regional development strategy; the formulation of goals and the process of information dissemination focused on the Länder's business development agencies – it could be compared to an ICE-Train (rapid intercity connection) which did not have any stops in small and medium sized cities. The regional aspects of the formation of cluster in Lower Austria has focused on flagship industries and firms – an understandable procedure during the inception phase of such a process; however, closer scrutiny of those regions that are not equipped with flagship industries and education facilities is now needed. (AT/ HOR REG).

Harghita County is a predominantly rural area. The Lisbon strategy concentrates more on the problems of the core-regions, to make them competitive. It will be **useful to introduce tailored activities and priorities within those New Member states** which are unable to sufficiently exploit the advantages of the strategy due to alack of necessary basic infrastructure and inadequate social conditions. (RO/ ECO LOC)

[...] concerning Bavaria, **weaker regions should not be over-stretched as regards the issue of "innovation"**, e.g. research institutes cannot be established everywhere (in every small and medium towns) or, not all SMEs can produce high technology goods. It is not only a pity, but it is also the wrong approach to fail to support certain regions because they are not innovative enough. (DE/ECO REG)

**#11. Inconsistencies and trade-offs were observed in terms of the relatively low importance of the social and environmental dimension of economic growth. While the Strategy put much greater emphasis on competitiveness and macro-economic issues, the local conditions for attracting business were neglected.**

The Lisbon Strategy puts a **much greater emphasis on business competitiveness and macroeconomic issues** and less on issues relating to sustainable development and social cohesion, which are our Prefecture's priorities due to the socioeconomic characteristics and the overburdened natural environment of the area. (GR/ HOR REG)

There is a clear **conflict between economic and social goals** here. (HU/ ECO REG)

**Social and environmental aspects** have been ignored as priorities. This is due to the excessive compartmentalization of the priorities: a greener society can promote growth and a more unified effort to sustainability; instead the lack of such a holistic approach has meant some priorities are left aside. (SE/ SOC LOC)

#### **Example: The LS fails to address a local precondition for economic growth**

The Cornwall Programme Priority 4 is at its core about making the CPR area a better place – a more sustainable place to live and work. For us **this means developing housing and workplace opportunities** in a planned and integrated way. There is a paradox in Cornwall as it has low unemployment, but also low skills levels, poor growth and low Gross Valued added (GVA) business. It has a small population – around 500000 residents but its economic hinterland is limited, and as a peninsula we are surrounded on three sides by the sea. Economically the area suffers peripherality. More importantly, there is a significant housing shortage and as a result the average cost of housing in the area is among the highest in the UK. To grow and prosper the area needs the economically active population to increase. This requires a significant increase in the availability of affordable (social) housing in order to attract new people. In the UK, housing is generally provided by the private sector but the private sector cannot build in Cornwall because the cost of building is beyond the scope of the people's ability to pay. Hence the need to attract more economically active people; people who will attract higher salaries. But **without more housing it is virtually impossible to get businesses to grow** and to attract more people into the area. The housing shortage is therefore an economic issue which the EU programme (and Lisbon) are unable to address (UK/ ECO REG)

**#12. The insufficient relationship between strategic goals and financial resources hindered the implementation of the Lisbon goals. In some cases, the high allocation of funds did not cater to the basic needs of LRAs and resulted in a lack of a local response. The monitoring of results was not always properly taken into account for financial re-allocation.**

The main LS topics are important for us, but at the local or regional level there **are insufficient links between the strategic goals and the financial resources needed** for their realization. We felt that the results of monitoring were not being used properly for financial allocation. (CZ/ ECO REG)

[...] there is an evident **discrepancy between the objectives** promoted and the corresponding financial resources. (ES/ ECO REG)

The first Lodzkie Voivodship Development Strategy needed to be modified due to changing EU policy and Poland's EU accession. More attention needed to be paid to the R&D sector and its partnership with business. **The high allocation of funds for the Lisbon Strategy attracts a low amount of interest from LRAs** as they have more basic development objectives (PL/ HOR LOC)

**#13. “Operational inconsistency”: LRAs had problems in translating strategic objectives into action on the ground.**

Priorities were established in both Spain and Catalonia and adjusted according to Lisbon Strategy. The **translation of priorities through concrete action** is a completely different aspect, though. (ES/ ECO REG)

The Marche Regional scenario was already pretty much in line with Lisbon priorities and objectives. However, the inconsistency was never between Lisbon and the LRAs' vision but in the way that this vision was to be **translated into practice**. (IT/ ECO REG)

**Inconsistencies** are possible due to the Lisbon Strategy's broad remit and the local authorities' lack of skills in many areas, as well as because of the difficulties in implementing integrated strategies (e.g. between economy and energy) due to the high level of administrative distance and fragmentation. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#14. The Lisbon Strategy has been “far away from local level” – its needs, its realities, and its people (especially in times of economic crisis). This is linked to the fact, that the local level, social cohesion and employment were not sufficiently highlighted. It has shown a low level of responsiveness in reacting to exceptional situations such as the economic crisis.**

"The **Lisbon priorities are often too ambitious** and far removed from the realities at local level. The Lisbon Strategy does not take into account the negative impact of the current economic crisis. Better coordination between different levels (European, national and local) is necessary. (FR/ ECO REG)

The Lisbon Strategy focuses on economic competitiveness through a liberalization policy that **ignores the realities at local level** (especially in times of economic crisis and considering the industrial and economic history of Dunkirk). More attention should be given to the **local level, social cohesion and employment**. (FR/ ECO REG)

There were a number of inconsistencies, especially in the **timing and the planning for exceptional situations** such as the crisis: such strategies plan/organize the development of their activities but when it comes to tackling unplanned issues, the strategies do not allocate time or resources accordingly, the current crisis scenario offered several examples of this. (IT/ ECO REG)

### **3.1.3 Concrete examples, where such inconsistency had a negative effect on the delivery of the Lisbon strategy?**

**#15. Several examples show that LRAs have had little flexibility to use LS funds to combat the rise of unemployment due to the global economic crisis or the collapse of industry.**

The Piedmont Region was especially affected by the financial measures dedicated to the **unemployment wave tied to the global crisis**. The LRAs were forced to use other funds which will then be unavailable for other initiatives (IT/ ECO REG)

In the 90's the **textile industry collapsed** in Lodz. As it was the main source of occupation, the fear of the effects of unemployment pushed the Government to support the largest textile companies, leaving the SMEs without any support. As a result, and with the current crisis, there are large companies which need support while the SME sector is still underdeveloped and lacks agility (although

several programmes have been prepared to rescue them and encourage local development) (PL/ ECO LOC)

The inconsistencies were not related to the establishment of objectives, but were instead caused by the omission of the necessary activities in the pursuit of such objectives (e.g. the **structural reform of the labour market**) and activities which require a large consensus among the actors involved. The failure to adopt the necessary measures to achieve the long-term objectives has resulted in a lack of progress in meeting those objectives (ES/ ECO REG)

**#16. The ‘fragmented approach’ in EU strategies and funding makes it difficult for local and regional actors to overcome this sectoral approach on the ground.**

The **approach is too fragmented** and a more holistic view is necessary in order to successfully implement an overarching strategy e.g. in the context of the Interreg IV C Programme in which the Stockholm Region participated within the GROW project. The purpose of the Programme was to overcome the sectoral approach and to favour more holistic perspectives, but instead the EC decided to once again divide themes into separate projects, creating the PEOPLE and POWER projects which once again did not allow cooperation among the agents involved. (SE/ SOC LOC)

The problems were mainly related to the **general budget allocation** across the various themes. Consequently, the measures delivered were less ambitious than previously planned. (ES/ ECO REG)

**#17. The inconsistencies at operational level are more important to LRAs than those existing at strategic level. The translation of the National Reform Programme to local level was often not conducted in a formal and structured way. The preparation of the progress reports for National Reform Programmes did not take sufficient account of regional and local partners.**

There was no inconsistency as far as the priorities were concerned; however, difficulties **sometimes occur at operative level** which may easily be overcome. The priorities correspond well with each other and a good level of programme cohesion and consciousness was achieved. Some doubts arise regarding the **programmes practical application** which in reality becomes a far more complicated topic. (IT/ ECO REG)

Again, the **translation of the National Reform Programme to local level** was not conducted in a formal and structured manner, making it difficult to estimate

the coherence in addition to the aforementioned general agreement on objectives and areas of intervention. (ES/ ECO LOC)

## 3.2 Policy tools and delivery

### 3.2.1 What were the main obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in LRAs?

**#18. The translation and further operability of the Lisbon Strategy has been the main challenge for local and regional actors across all priorities. It proved challenging to translate the text of the Strategy itself into an action plan.**

**The translation of the strategy** for regions has proven to be difficult. Key-words need to be made more tangible in the strategies in order to facilitate implementation. (AT/ ECO REG)

It is important that targets are included in the strategy but there is also a need for the **further translation of this strategy** into a new climate and energy package by DG Environment. (BE/ ENV REG)

The Lisbon strategy certainly includes many themes that constitute priorities for our authority. However, it is a **text that can hardly be used as a specific action plan with visible targets** because of its complexity and due to the lack of general public awareness about the strategy. (GR /HOR REG)

**#19. The LS did not lend itself to the mobilization of actors at the local and regional levels (both public and private). It should have had fewer and clearer objectives for this purpose, with clearly related actions for implementation over a set timeframe. The strategy should further be capable of responding to new challenges (e.g. economic crisis, energy crisis etc.)**

**The difficulties involved mobilizing** local businesses as the Lisbon strategy seems to be disconnected from companies' real needs in this area. Difficulties also arose with mobilizing the local authorities (lack of information and legibility). (FR/ ECO REG)

The LS **did not become part of the actual policy process** in Greece. For this to have happened, it would have needed fewer and more specific objectives, that were easy to understand, listed and structured into just a few objectives, in keeping with the challenges of our times for implementation over a set timeframe (e.g. energy is now far more current than just a few years ago; the challenge of Asian countries is now far more pronounced). (GR/ HOR LOC)

**#20. Missing competences and the lack of involvement of local and regional authorities and administrative fragmentation have been an obstacle to the effective implementation of the LS.**

The Lisbon strategy at state level is specified in the NRP. The **participation of the regions and local authorities is minimal** in the process of developing the NRP. The **role of the regions is limited largely to monitoring the objectives** outlined in the NRP and to handing the state the list of measures or actions by regional or thematic area that fit into the NRP. The main problem is that many of the objectives or actions of the Lisbon Strategy in Spain are the responsibility of the regions yet this is not taken sufficiently into account when developing the NRP, which hinders the coordination and articulation of the measures. (ES/ ECO REG)

[...] the translation at local level has also been complicated by the **struggle in assigning the different competences** and by **municipal fragmentation** as both hamper the development of actions within certain strategic dimensions. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#21. A lack of commitment from different government levels and an unclear division of roles and responsibilities have had a negative impact on the achievements of the LS.**

The **lack of a formal structure** for strategy implementation, with objectives and responsibilities shared among the different government levels. (ES/ ECO LOC)

You need to have shorter programmes which have some kind of five year mid-term plan. Furthermore, the **division of roles and responsibilities** in the design and implementation of the strategy has to be clearer: what is the responsibility of the EU, and each government level? (GR/ HOR LOC)

**#22. Specific national obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of research and innovation include a non-receptive cultural atmosphere, general hostility against innovation, and the concentration of funds on infrastructures instead of a systematic approach to innovation.**

The main obstacle in the area of Research and Innovation was the **generally non receptive/unprepared cultural atmosphere**. Some action should therefore be taken to broadly inform and disseminate, avoiding the sector approach, this concept to act as a catalyst towards changing the non receptive/unprepared cultural environment. (When mentioning a good example of initiatives which improve the general cultural atmosphere she mentions the Creativity Year especially because of its wide approach applicable to many fields and which

therefore enjoyed wide participation). In the general cultural climate, cultural innovation as a value is nowadays transmitted only for certain topics and can be quite technocratic in its contents and approach. Until now, the effort of stimulating cooperation between the public and the private sphere has received very positive response and outcomes, especially with regard to the Science and Technology frameworks, but the cultural aspect should also be included in the concept of innovation. (IT/ ECO REG)

**Focusing on infrastructures** has prevented the development of a systematic approach to innovation. (PL/ ECO LOC)

In our region, there is a lack of quality infrastructure (technical, transport, social...). The **majority of the budget goes to reconstruction or other important sectors** instead of to support for research, innovation and development of SMEs. (SK/ ENV REG)

The Lisbon strategy is to a considerable extent implemented in our region due to our structural funds programme. **Budgetary restraints** are an obvious limitation. (NL/ ECO REG)

**#23. Specific national obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in the field of energy include the activities of national lobbies, which oppose the creation of a renewable energy sector, unfavourable national legislation on waste management and the environment or an unfavourable environment for small scale solutions.**

Another general obstacle to the implementation of the LS was the nature of the Polish Energy sector, which has traditionally been based on and ruled by its **coal lobbies, which now oppose the creation of a renewable energies sector** and, consequently, the principle of sustainable and greener development. There are also difficulties in waste treatment as a very restrictive legislative framework has been created, which is also reflected in the legislation on waste management and environment in general. (PL/ ECO LOC)

Many excellent scientists have moved abroad because they do not have sufficient opportunities for work in our region, or where such opportunities do exist, the salary is unsatisfactory. The economic power of our region is weak. It mainly consists of factories that employ workers with only a secondary school education which is a perfect background for cheap manpower but not for research. In the renewable energy sector, we still **do not have a motivating environment** for small scale equipment so our progress is based on the personal activity of SMEs. (SK/ ENV REG)

### 3.2.2 Which policy tools were most relevant to local and regional actors for achieving the Lisbon objectives?

**#24. The policy tools that could help LRAs become more actively involved in the implementation of overarching EU strategies include making the strategy more binding with a clearer division of responsibilities, clearer guidelines and communicable principles, and illustrative objectives to enable stakeholders to communicate the strategy more effectively. Better planning and monitoring tools as well as more autonomy for LRAs to implement the strategy would also increase visibility.**

**Making the policy tools binding** could increase the level of competence, control and therefore legitimise the activities of the LRAs and improve their efficiency. (IT/ ECO REG)

Policy tools that could help LRAs to become more actively involved include **democratic principles**, strategic and territorial **planning tools**, decision **competences**, **financial tools** (national funds, EU funds,...), **monitoring**. (CZ/ ECO REG)

**Good practice examples** represent the most illustrative tools for helping LRAs to learn from the LS. Furthermore, **clearer guidelines** are needed at EU level to give LRAs an indication of where they need to go with their action (e.g. as is currently the case in the EU2020 strategy). The tools most relevant were simple **principles** that can be easily communicated (e.g. the traffic-ban in the regional capital Graz) and clearer and more **illustrative objectives** which enable implementing bodies to communicate the strategy more easily. (AT/ ECO REG)

Regional and local authorities must have a **greater influence on the distribution of European money**. Also, they need a clear understanding and exact numbers of what the EU expects from them. We need to ensure clarity and understanding in achieving targets to bring about fair competition. The public must understand why we need to put money into this particular part of the economy, and what this decision can mean for our region. The public must have confidence in its regional and local representatives. (SK/ ENV REG)

**#25. Formal competences and financing tools are the most important instruments for local and regional authorities for achieving the objectives of overarching EU Strategies. Regarding financing, however, not only the amount but also the autonomy in spending is relevant (a specific fund for local authorities would be an interesting option for the LS).**

**Formal competences** and financing tools would help LRAs become more actively involved (e.g. Structural Funds programmes) (NL/ ECO REG)

**Financing tools** [are the most relevant], as the national financing for LRAs is becoming very poor due to the different priorities that our National Government has set out in its agenda. (IT/ ECO REG)

The most relevant issues are mainly **formal competences** for regional government and then **financing tools**. For regional governments, it is important to have financial resources based on their competences and the autonomy to make decisions about the use of money at regional and local, rather than central, level. (SK/ ENV REG)

Our experience shows that **financing instruments** are the **instruments that give better results**. European funds, and more specifically the requirement to allocate 75% of the funds in the Lisbon objectives and in R & D framework programmes, are the most obvious examples. (ES/ ECO REG)

The most visible tools are in the area of **financing** (community financial assistance, state/SF subsidy, and development loans), **formal competences and professional advisory services**. The most important areas are pre-financing/financing tools, the advisory services in the fields of public procurement and project-management (e.g. preparation, monitoring, evaluation). (HU/ ECO REG)

**#26. Monitoring, and evaluation as tools to help achieve the LS reveal a mixed picture: on the one hand, these tools were an important element for involving LRAs and giving them feedback; on the other hand monitoring and evaluation were in many cases perceived as a disproportionate administrative burden (in particular in the case of small interventions). The benchmarking of regions was mentioned as an alternative to foster voluntary competition between regions to meet the targets.**

The **monitoring tools** had a much less significant impact for both member States and for Regions. In fact, during the 10 year period over which Lisbon has been implemented, very little progress has been made in most of the targets set

at the beginning. The economic crisis partly explains these disappointing results but it is not the only reason. (ES/ ECO REG)

**The planning and monitoring** of mid-term objectives based on long-term strategies would be an important tool. Other important items include the allocation of sufficient funds for supporting strategic objectives, proper management (less politically adjusted) and evaluation. (PL/ HOR LOC); (NL/ ECO REG)

**Monitoring tools** are also needed, as LRAs need to receive precise feedback from local level and the citizens, and also need to check whether the financing is used appropriately– something which cannot be taken for granted in Italy. (IT/ ECO REG)

**Example: Favour proportionality of control/monitoring of funds**

The Marche case appears satisfactory in terms of its approach and the competences given to the Regional authority (in the area of financial autonomy). However, the whole control/monitoring apparatus has turned out to be a policy tool which has provided severe complications. Its size is completely out of proportion to its end users (LRAs). There are too many administrative entities and too many levels involved in budget/financing control activities; this often puts off the end users rather than supporting them. There should be more correlation between control mechanisms and the funds granted; sometimes small funding schemes are submitted to the same control dynamics as are used for larger programmes, which results in slower and more complicated operations. (IT/ ECO REG)

The **benchmarking of regions** which is understood not as a system of punishment but as a system of recognition and awarding would be an interesting option. A special programme/initiative for clear and simple financing could be designed to fund regions that go beyond a certain level of targets (i.e. rapid and successful regions). However, this should be something simpler than the Regions for Economic Change. There is a need for shorter programme times and a shorter life-time at strategic level (i.e. more frequent reviews and evaluation). (GR/ HOR LOC)

**#27. Some stakeholders from LRAs do not see the need to invent new tools but to make existing tools more binding.**

A very effective tool already exists within the Italian system of local autonomies, which means there is therefore **no need to invent different tools**. The agents within this system have so far interacted in a very proactive and dynamic way, offering valid dialogue with all the social, political and economic

agents involved. They would be interesting partners for the creation of more platforms as well as offering best practice sharing and participation dynamics. (IT/ ECO REG)

The mechanism created by the Strategy works correctly, it just **needs to be taken on board and accepted by the participants** who, nonetheless, do believe that it will work without any problems. The level of participation is high and awareness is also increasing. One topic that should perhaps be given more consideration in the future is the standardization/regulation of the participating agents so that the operations/relations can benefit from a little more order. **No new tools need to be invented**; what needs to be improved is the culture of Local actors all over Europe through information and **participation**. Operations could also benefit in the future from an overall harmonization process. (IT/ ECO REG)

**Any tool can be relevant if appropriately used** within a logically structured system. In this sense, at local level and in line with the subsidiary principle, every key factor is capable of bringing added value. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#28. Policy tools for knowledge exchange (awareness raising actions, incentives, Lisbon Monitoring Platform etc.) helped Local and Regional Authorities to be more actively involved in the implementation of the Strategy.**

Policy tools that help LRAs to be more actively involved include all kinds of **knowledge sharing**, more **arenas for debate and practices exchange**, and more tools for fostering cooperation, such as:

- Public participation,
- International platforms, projects and best practices sharing arenas
- Programmes raising awareness of the different priorities
- Programmes actively involving NGOs
- More University participation and involvement
- Incentive systems fostering sustainable technologies and green innovation
- Knowledge to business transfer

(PL/ ECO LOC)

Cooperative dynamics, **experience sharing** among different actors [...] (SE/ SOC LOC)

The **Lisbon Monitoring Platform** itself represents an excellent tool although it is still difficult to find partners for best practice sharing as there is no specific tool for finding out about best practices. A benchmarking tool/process should be standardized. (SK/ ENV REG)

**#29. In the field of the economy, innovation and cluster development all LRA policy tools which are participatory and which foster technological transfer are relevant: financing tools in combination with innovative services for SMEs support for networks and cluster activities as well as support for the unified research area.**

A set of **financing tools in combination with a number of new (more innovative) services** on how to help SMEs to grow would be very relevant. A closer look on tax refunding schemes for R&D activities of companies and institutions could also be relevant. (AT/ ECO REG)

Collaborative R&D, innovation services, **cooperative cluster activities**, all initiatives which are participatory and which foster **technological transfer [are relevant]**. A concrete example of such a policy tool is the Catalonia project TECNIO: a platform created by ACC10 which brings together the main actors and experts in technology transfer and applied research. (ES/ ECO REG)

The role of the public sector is not limited to providing sufficient research infrastructures and funding basic research, but must also include **support for the formation of local and non-local networks**, the establishment of new or expanded institutions and organisations (such as transfer offices, incubators, technology parks). (DE/ HOR LOC)

Giving more space and value to international R&D activities among EU actors in order to create a truly unified research area (ES/ ECO REG)

**#30. In the field of environment and renewable energy the tools are mainly developed at lower administrative levels. Consequently, there is no need for new instruments but for a stable framework (e.g. especially in the area of renewable energy sources). EU economic and financial aid also plays an important role.**

Instruments relating to the environment are mainly developed at lower administrative levels, consequently there is no **need for more instruments** or new instruments, only new funds. (BE/ ENV REG)

In the **energy field** it is necessary to **ensure an appropriate and stable competence/powers framework** which can ensure the successful implementation of the regional energy policy, especially the promotion of renewable energy, energy saving and efficiency and support for energy RDI

(Research, Development and Innovation). Also, to maximize the implementation of initiatives under regional projects for new energy technologies that use renewable energy or promote energy efficiency savings, there is a need for financial and funding resources are required. Although not exclusively the case, these projects are largely funded through the ERDF or the Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme of the CIP, which provide economic resources for their implementation. For this reason, **EU economic and financial aid plays an important role** in progressing towards a sustainable energy sector. (ES/ ENV REG)

### 3.2.3 Under what conditions can an EU strategy such as the Lisbon Strategy be effectively delivered?

**#31. Better coordination and a clear division of responsibilities should be based on the process already began with the LS. The EU level defines the basic objectives while the national level ensures the full participation of all government levels in the development and adoption of objectives. The EU could potentially be an external evaluator and disseminator of practices.**

In general, the process begun by the Lisbon Strategy must be continued and intensified, **defining and identifying new forms of cooperation** to achieve the important goals that have been set. European policy should continue laying down the foundations for new opportunities for future generations. In many ways, the achievements to date are driving forward growth and creating employment in new flexible, strong and open markets. (ES/ ENV REG)

**At EU level**, there is a definition of the basic objectives about which there is a broad consensus. **At the State level** it is necessary to establish mechanisms to ensure the full participation of all three government levels in the development and adoption of objectives and action lines which need to be consistent with the Community framework, but tailored to the local and regional dimensions. The European Commission should be fully involved in these processes as an **external evaluator**, meaning that the assessment should not be solely ex-post but instead should be carried out throughout the entire process. The Commission should also have a role in the **evaluation and dissemination of best practices**. (ES/ ECO REG)

**#32. Strong vertical coordination (across different administrative levels) ensures the implementation of the Strategy as well as the commitment of the stakeholders involved.**

A suitable method of **coordination should include the ministry and the representatives of regional and micro regional centres** (our region of 400 000 inhabitants has 10 micro regional centres) e.g. through the assessment of specific indicators. At present, the strategy is based on LS principles but evaluation takes place at local level, there is no “bottom-up” evaluation. (CZ/ ECO REG)

Coordination is needed **between local level and regional level**, the guarantor of the strategic objectives. (FR/ ECO REG)

**#33. A more central role for the regions gives them the opportunity to create favourable conditions for implementing EU strategies at lower administrative levels.**

This type of strategy should be coordinated by **granting Regions a more central** role, as the current top-bottom approach is too limiting and does not allow more autonomy for the regions or their formal recognition. (ES/ ECO REG)

**Regional authorities should be enabled** to create favourable conditions for implementing the strategy. (IT/ ECO REG)

**#34. By ensuring coordination between the European institutions, the CoR has a specific role to play in policy formulation and needs to ensure the involvement of not only local and regional representatives, but also of the technical actors concerned with implementation tasks.**

It can be delivered by **establishing clear goals** (not overly complicated or theoretical – the objectives should be kept simple so they can be understood and accomplished). Another condition would be more fluid **dialogue between the EC and the DGs** as there is a lack of communication, especially with the actors involved in project tasks. The political actors are therefore far removed from those who translate policies into local reality and this does not favour synergies or dialogue as everyone “speaks and understands only his/her own language” (IT/ ECO REG)

The Lisbon Strategy coordination approach, along with the effective **incorporation of the Committee of the Regions** in its mechanisms, may still be useful. The problem is that not only was there a limited regional / local

presence when the Strategy was first drawn up, the measures/objectives set at that time have not always been carried out either. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#35. Coordination in the field of innovation is particularly challenging as multiple actors are involved from different institutions and levels of administration. Clear roles and responsibilities are needed to ensure coordination.**

In the case of Innovation, important action is needed at **administrative level**: a technical entity should be created for the purpose of coordinating the other agents responsible for innovation in the different areas.

There is a need to harmonise the parameters for all actors in the field of creation and competencies to ensure a more systematic and balanced development for strategy implementation. Resource optimization would also be needed. At the coordination level, the entire system should be restructured and harmonized to correctly carry out operations and objectives. (IT/ ECO REG)

The coordination of high levels of public participation and the clustering processes of different themes involving different actors should be conducted through **public consultations** involving the citizens. (PL/ ECO LOC)

#### **Example: Effects of non-coordination**

Example mentioned: The Marche Region established a fund for SMEs which was supposed to be financed through ERDF-ESF. However, the project failed to be launched due to a lack of communication between the actors involved and their different priorities. There should be adequate coordination between the “political” and the “technical” sphere which is currently missing but very much needed.

**#36. The creation of a suitable environment for the successful implementation of such a strategy means that every stakeholder must have a specific role and objectives. Moreover a broad consensus over key priorities should be achieved.**

It should be an environment where **every actor has specific** roles and objectives. The **objectives should be “cascading” in nature**: from a very limited number of those at European level (this does not mean they must be generic but rather that they should be truly strategic) to a somewhat more articulated and broader range at local level, without losing their adherence to the objectives established at the European level. This should help overcome the obstacle of asymmetries in the area of administrative organization and

competences in each EU country, as the ""cascade"" would be designed to suit each member state's specific situation. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**Broad consensus** regarding the key priorities. Close collaboration between the various government levels based on trust and on a joint effort. (ES/ ECO REG)

The strategy must be **defined in collaboration with the local elected authorities** (FR/ ECO REG)

Citizens should be involved through the LRAs. Globalisation should be viewed as an opportunity for learning and benchmarking, as the EU is currently too "EU focused" and does not consider other best practices or other examples existing outside Europe. (SE/ SOC LOC)

**Availability of funds**, presence of knowledge institutes, potential for cluster forming, R&D capacity. (NL/ ECO REG)

"The current crisis has brought about a lot of instability at macroeconomic level and the sectors affected should be stabilized in order to provide the ideal setting for the implementation of an overarching strategy. **Macroeconomic stability** and crisis related issues solution (ES/ ECO REG)

### 3.3 Multi-level Governance

#### 3.3.1 Are there any good examples that show how LRAs have been effectively involved in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in your region/sector?

**#37. Examples of good practices involving LRAs in the field of innovation and economy include the process of preparing the regional innovation strategy in the Czech Republic, the Catalan National Pact for Research and Innovation, the thematic platforms of the "Local Programme fostering Research and Innovation" of the Piedmont region as well as the overall Structural Funds 'Lisbonization'.**

As there are overlapping competences at European, national and regional level, **innovation policy** in our region provides a very good case for multi-level governance. Effective innovation policies in a region are greatly helped if there are strong regional organisations designing and implementing policies, and if a sufficient density and diversity of regional and local innovation organisations and firms operates interactively – both within, and beyond, the region. European support seems to make a difference for regional innovation. (DE/ HOR LOC)

One good example is the process of **preparing the "regional innovation strategy"**, which was developed by more than 60 stakeholders. Intensive communication and cooperation between stakeholders helps to realize projects from the action plan. The Innovation strategy is focused on infrastructure for innovation, human resources, international cooperation as well as finance.

From the regional point of view, we do not have sufficient information to compare it with every single administrative level. It is the people themselves who are able to implement the LS. In this situation, we believe that the voluntary participation of so many people on the project is important. (CZ/ ECO REG)

The **Catalan National Pact for Research and Innovation (2008)** is a seven year programme in which the Catalan Government has involved all research and innovation local actors in the development of a common strategy. They were involved in the National Plan promotion and in the consensus building process. Once the Plan was agreed upon, they also supported and advised the elaboration of its Governance structure. It is a successful case of cooperative R&D and of a true participatory process with a common collectively pursued purpose. (ES/ ECO REG)

**Structural funds “lisbonization”** and the definition and implementation of operational programmes actively involve the local and regional actors who have directed their projects towards the Lisbon objectives. (ES/ ECO REG)

The local/regional actors played an important role in the **development of entrepreneurship** in our area, creating and displaying a set of policies and instruments that would go beyond local competences and which have managed to bring the Barcelona province, in terms of entrepreneurship, well above the European average (as reflected in the GEM reports). (ES/ ECO LOC)

The **Marche Region** has proven to be a dynamic and quite successful area in terms of **involvement**, although the support from the Italian Government has been rather weak and the results achieved to date are linked to single regional initiatives rather than national stimulus. The geographical closeness and relationship with citizenship is a clear advantage when compared with national actors. (IT/ ECO REG)

We operate in the tourism sector, which at national level is a competence of the LRAs. The Province of Treviso and the Province of Venice, for example, have invited us to **contribute to the implementation of a new tourism strategy** based on the Lisbon Strategy, to introduce a new form of sustainable tourism offering integrated products that enhance the cultural richness of our region. New project ideas have been developed, of which the LRAs were the promoters. These projects are currently ongoing, which means that the analysis and elaboration of the data and the results will be ready in a few months' time. (IT/ ECO REG)

The "**Local Programme fostering Research and Innovation**" (Piedmont Regional Law 4/2006) created several thematic platforms in which all the actors could share experiences and cooperate with one another. Several topics were covered but the most successful case was the Aero spatial Platform which brought together participants from the local authorities, industry and the world of academia. [...] The specific role of the LRAs was that of a mediator, catalyst and strategy planner based on the needs and capabilities of every local participant in the platform. It allowed the local actors to gain a better understanding of their abilities and potential, offered an invaluable chance for local stakeholders to negotiate and participate in larger dynamics and to gain experience outside of their traditional area of competence. It was also an excellent opportunity to observe and participate in different national contexts and to strategize with different partners, proving the efficiency and value of local stakeholders as valuable mediators and close partners in the process of promoting initiatives, especially at their incubation phase (IT/ ECO REG)

**#38. Good practices involving LRAs in the field in renewable energy and environment include activities in the area of sustainable urban development (including water management, connections between green areas, urban planning) in the city of Lodz, as well as the cooperation framework in order to promote discourse on social and environmental promotion in Sweden.**

Regarding Sustainable urban development (including water management, establishing links between green areas, urban planning) **the SWITCH project** involved Lodz and UNESCO in the revitalization of Lodz' green and former industrial areas and included all interested parties. It has produced remarkable results, while at the same time improving the quality of the entire city, both socially and culturally. (PL/ ECO LOC)

Immigration and **cooperative work with the local business environment** have been actively integrated in the discourse of social and environmental promotion to achieve environmental sustainability. As LRAs were closer to the local reality, this could be done more efficiently than by other administrative levels. This shows the virtue of cooperation with great benefits for the business sector, the city and the individual. (SE/ SOC LOC)

**#39. Good practices involving LRAs in social fields include activities to connect schools to the internet in the Slovak republic as well as the Austrian “Learning Region” Working Group which was set up at regional level to join forces with and to strengthen synergies between the various regional players.**

**The Learning Region Working Group:** a broad working group has been set up, comprising economic stakeholders (regional centre for technology and services), educational institutions, training and skills/qualifications organisations, labour market offices and social institutions (social enterprises, labour market foundations in the case of large employers in crisis etc.). Established at regional level, its aim is to join forces with and to strengthen synergies between the various regional players (a bottom-up approach which is rather similar to the so-called Territorial Employment Pacts (TEPs) – the latter being somewhat subject to a top-down strategy in Austria). (AT/ HOR REG)

In Slovakia, thanks to European funds and in accordance with LS targets and national co-financing, all LRAs (as of the main founders of schools) were able to **connect their schools to the internet**. Similarly, they were able to repair roads and railways which helped improve the quality of life for inhabitants and to increase the interest shown by investors. (SK/ ENV REG)

### **3.3.2 How well developed is multi-level governance for the implementation of overarching EU Strategies (such as the Lisbon Strategy, Europe 2020 etc.) and what are the related problems?**

**#40. In many cases the approach used for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy has been described as clearly top-down.**

The **top-down** approach is used, but the implementation of most strategic documents lies within the LRA's competence. LRAs have extensive decision-making powers. Several coordination mechanisms have been set up but there are definitely better ways of coordinating the implementation of the LS. LRAs sometimes perceive the LS as being somewhat distant, while the National reform programme is much closer to them. (CZ/ ECO REG)

In France, the approach is **mainly top-down**. The **local level is not sufficiently involved** in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy by the European and national authorities. The coordination mechanism should be reviewed. There is a lack of information from local elected authorities. (FR/ ECO REG)

The **top-down approach is the dominant system** in Poland but coordination mechanisms are developed alongside government authorities and LRAs (Local and Regional Authorities) in the form of working groups. LRAs analyse, evaluate and study regional circumstances to enable them to improve how they plan and implement activities and funds. LRAs often count on a bottom up response from local and regional partners (PL/ HOR LOC)

**#41. In some cases (Greece, Poland etc.) the national context for the implementation of overarching strategies is currently changing in so far as either administrative reforms are ongoing or the country is still in the process of refining its own governance system.**

A **major administrative reform** is currently underway in Greece which has been discussed for 5 or 6 years: the regions will be elected by the end of the year. This will lead to larger municipal authorities, and the elected presidents of regions and prefecture style authorities will be replaced by regions as the 2nd level of local government. We will have to wait and see what means are put at their disposal (financial and competences). (GR/ HOR LOC)

Poland is still undergoing a phase of **refining its own governance** system but the MLG approach is already known and is seen in positive terms. So far the **approach has been more top-down**, as the main legislative competences lie at

National level. Thank to actors such as the CoR, however, they have already had the chance to be active and to participate at EU level. The MLG will be the next step once the state has acquired a definitive governance structure which will define the three main roles (National, regional, local). (PL/ ECO LOC)

There is clearly a **top-down approach** which is good for coordination activities but not very good for decision-making on support in specific areas. However, this is slowly changing and we are still trying to identify the best model for our country and regions. (SK/ ENV REG)

**#42. LRAs are facing a number of problems when trying to adopt a multi-level-governance approach for implementing EU Strategies such as a lack of awareness among key actors, a “centralized mindset” and rigid approaches which prevent dialogue.**

There are two sets of difficulties related to the **lack of MLG development in Italy**: one concerns the issue of awareness, the other – operations. They are closely related and both derive from the Italian centralized mindset and bureaucratic approach. There is **no strong tradition of action or participation** either in institutions or in citizen groups and this fosters a resistant environment. Both the top-down and bottom up approaches exist. Top down: from the national/supranational level, especially in terms of rules/controls/parameters. Bottom up: considering the efforts of a Region in assuming a certain role by its own initiative as in the Marche case.

It is a crucial priority for LRAs to identify and **define their own roles and action space** and for them to be formally recognized by the other stakeholders. Regional actors often suffer from a very rigid approach which prevents dialogue and confrontation and which establishes an insurmountable distance between the fixed political apparatus and more flexible dynamics. (Example mentioned: project evaluation parameters from DG Regio: these change too often without adequate communication and without considering the actual activities, carried out by LRAs, to which they refer.) (IT/ ECO REG)

**MLG is not developed in Italy** but in Piedmont there has been a lot of effort to find a way of stimulating the rollout of MLG which has been undertaken both from the bottom (encouraging stakeholders) and from the top (establishing specific coordination measures). One concrete example is the Innovation Poles of Piedmont which channelled and matched the industry innovation demand. (IT/ ECO REG)

**#43. While multi-level governance has become commonplace for EU funding, it does, however, require time, openness to the participation of LRAs as well as appropriate coordination mechanisms for LRAs.**

The implementation of the Strategy is carried out at multiple levels, e.g. the national strategic plans are first developed at federal state level and are then implemented in the regions. I can say that **multi-level governance is the everyday business of EU funding**. The disadvantage regarding MLG is the time needed for such an approach (working on several levels) but this is not a problem that is specific to Lisbon. (DE/ HOR REG)

Local and regional partners **participate in the development of ERDF Operational Programmes** and thereby help to devise ways in which the Programme area can deliver activities that are Lisbon compliant. (UK/ ECO REG)

In the Netherlands, MLG is strongly developed and the overall approach is more bottom-up in style. Appropriate **coordination mechanisms** include objectives and restrictions for the structural funds programme, coordination by management authorities, etc. (NL/ ECO REG)

#### **Example: Regional managements as an instrument to foster MLG**

In Styria, **regional managements** work as an interface between the region, sub-regional actors and national actors, and provide a supporting infrastructure for development, information exchange and coordination. The regional management system supports the introduction of a 'regional governance' approach to regional development and also incorporates EU regional policy. (AT/ ECO REG)

The cooperative agreements between Central State and Regions (Autonomous Communities) do exist but they do not provide a strategic orientation and they do not support the change in the roles of Regions. The approach is top-down and the coordination mechanisms foresee stronger **participation and active Regions especially in the strategic planning processes**. The Regions are the actors who actually implement the strategies but this does not mean that the Regions should only be considered as the executors. They also have a voice and an opinion which should be taken into account more widely. (ES/ ECO REG)

The process could be improved in terms of coordination: LRAs should have more of a voice, although in the case of Poland, the presence of **intermediate platforms and commissions** does allow the LRAs to interact with Central Government. (PL/ ECO LOC)

## 3.4 Challenges for future EU Strategies

### 3.4.1 What do LRAs need to play a greater role in the implementation of overarching EU Strategies?

**#44. More competences for LRAs and different rules at EU/national levels enabling the more consistent allocation of duties and responsibilities are needed.**

"There is a **need to change the rules at EU/National level** to favour the inclusion of all possible territorial realities; more care should be taken to reach a true non formal agreement on such rules. At the National level there should be more dedication to value and protecting the Regions' competences; there is a need to bridge the gap between political and technical/operational competences.

- Formalization of standards/procedures
- Common, agreed measures
- Equal and efficient competences/content allocations
- Less formalism, as it gives a wrong perception of the entire institutional apparatus (IT/ ECO REG)

An **allocation of duties and responsibilities** consistent with local and administrative structures. Such allocations must take into account the nature of the objectives that each stakeholder/level can accomplish and the tools which must be made available for each stakeholder to pursue these objectives. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#45. LRAs need better recognition at all administrative levels and stronger involvement in all phases of the policy cycle (policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)**

LRAs **need to be recognized and actively included** in the EU governance architecture. LRAs also need **more opportunities** to share best practices, for transfer processes and cooperation building in R&D and R&D services (ES/ ECO REG).

LRAs need **more recognition** from the institutions, more autonomy, more cooperation opportunities, a new financing system, and more opportunities for sharing practices and processes (SE/ SOC LOC).

There is a need to **ensure greater LRA participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of the NRP**, particularly in those areas that fall within their competences. LRAs have not endorsed an NRP that was prepared mainly by the central government, which has undoubtedly hampered

the articulation, coordination and implementation of measures often left in a statement of intent. (ES/ ECO REG)

First, we need to **have a first class speaker** such as the Committee of the Regions. Second, as part of the process of recognising local diversity in Europe, we need to build a strategy that contributes to territorial cohesion and where each local area will be able to adopt its specific position based on its means and on the aspirations of its citizens. (ES/ ECO LOC)

**#46. LRAs need more incentives, funds and resources (know-how, specialists etc) to pursue the goals of EU strategies more autonomously and more effectively.**

It is important to retain **access to ERDF-budgets** and to maintain the present competences. (NL/ ECO REG)

LRAs need to be more self-aware. There should be **more incentives** and more “privileges” for cities/urban areas; equally, metropolitan areas should play a more relevant role. There is a need to provide more support for innovative projects as well as incentives for cities that promote innovation. (PL/ ECO LOC)

LRAs need **more funds, more specialists** (especially in the field of technology transfer) to be more active in the consultation process, and better knowledge in the area of long-term programming and planning. (PL/ HOR LOC)

**#47. More participation and bottom-up activities from LRAs as well as from other interested actors are needed to broaden the overall commitment to EU strategies.**

There should be **more participation from the Regions** in the EU policy making processes. (ES/ ECO REG)

**Better bottom-up response**, more interest among SME's, R&D sector and LRAs. (PL/ HOR LOC)

### 3.4.2 What needs to be done to strengthen the MLG approach in the implementation of EU Strategies?

**#48. More communication dissemination and awareness-raising on EU Strategies is needed to make these activities known to a wider public.**

LRA's must be better informed and more interested in the implementation of the LS. Consequently, **better communication from national level** is needed, with earlier communication with LRAs in the preparation of strategic documents, and better evaluation and the more flexible application of evaluated data in future periods. (CZ/ ECO REG)

Organization of **meetings for the dissemination** of the Lisbon objectives with the local elected authorities. (FR/ ECO REG)

**#49. A better and more targeted flow of relevant information to the key actors should be achieved by appropriate instruments e.g. by setting up a contact point in each country or by ensuring the flow of information between the different governance structures (e.g. regional management).**

**A contact point in every country** would be a good idea. This office would have the main responsibility for helping the LRA to integrate the EU2020 strategy. (GR/ HOR LOC)

**A continuous flow of information** from EU, national and regional levels that does not overload the respective institutions with information (e.g. the paying agency must provide targeted information). Regional Managements can filter information to the target group. (AT/ ECO REG)

**Better communication** between LRA and national level and continual communication between national and European level. (CZ/ ECO REG)

**#50. More coordination activities and structures (more links between the actors, more arenas for debate) need to be created to provide access and coordination points for LRAs.**

**More creation of and support for existing platforms and networks** that share ideas, knowledge and involve both NGOs and citizens. A good example of just such a platform in Poland is the platform for Poland's largest cities (Lodz is the 3rd largest city in Poland) which provides a good arena for debate and for elaborating recommendations. Other thematic associations also exist and have a crucial role in participating in international projects/networks. (PL/ ECO LOC)

They need to create an **entity/agency to coordinate operations/actors**, to clearly map out all the actors and participants, set shorter-term goals (annual), and acquire a clearer status that would allow them to act more efficiently. They should also establish a think tank that can provide a forum for debate and interaction among the actors concerned. (IT/ ECO REG)

At the vertical level, there is a need for **more links** between the various actors involved. At horizontal level, meanwhile, there is a need for **more arenas** for comparative debates and cooperation opportunities. (SE/ SOC LOC)

**More technical coordination** would be a great help in the process. (IT/ ECO REG) (SK/ ENV REG)

### 3.4.3 What kind of post-Lisbon activities do you expect from the Committee of the Regions in future?

**#51. Local and Regional Authorities expect the Committee of the Regions to ensure their active participation and full involvement in future EU strategies, to support the decentralization process and to facilitate networking and a focused exchange of practices. While training for LRAs could be an option, stronger involvement in monitoring and a structured and critical reflection on the achievements of EU strategies would also be welcomed.**

The Committee of the Regions should play an active role in **ensuring the active participation and full involvement of the regions** in the development, implementation and monitoring of the EU2020 Strategy. The EU2020 Strategy must not represent a step backwards in terms of the regions' responsibilities and the decentralization process. (ES/ ECO REG)

**Facilitating networking and focused exchange** on specific development issues could be another activity. This would, however, require fairly targeted options for a quick search of information or the provision of information based on a distinct profile. (AT/ HOR REG)

I would like to see **more involvement** from the CoR's members in different areas. The members who are involved and responsible for the Lisbon strategy should be more actively involved. They could and should create **more committees and integrate more members in an active manner**. (MT/ HOR LOC)

**The exchange of best practice** is always welcome. I understand there is more clarity in the future role of CoR, which enables the committee to **formally respond** to proposals (UK/ ECO REG)

More activities relating to LRA **training** on: (1) How to commercialize technology, (2) How to create networks, (3) How to translate EU legislation at local level (PL/ ECO LOC)

Mainly **monitoring the results achieved** in the regions, support for international exchanges, communication and dissemination activities on the CoR's role and explanation of decisions adopted by the European institutions (SK/ ENV REG)

Would suggest a firmer approach both by the CoR and the LRAs in achieving an actual and tangible impact, to **carry out more constructive self criticism on what has not been achieved**, more analysis of the causes in order to identify solutions, less “laissez-faire” in general for all the agents involved in the process. (IT/ ECO REG)



# 4 Annex

## 4.1 Methodology

### 4.1.1 Objectives

The specific operational challenges of these tasks consisted of

- identifying relevant questions covering the areas specified by the CoR (i.e. issues relevant to the design of the new strategy's priorities, objectives and governance system)
- drafting questions in a manner that makes it possible to draw meaningful conclusions
- briefing interviewers so that the questions are addressed in a meaningful manner

### 4.1.2 Overall research questions

- Did the former Lisbon Strategy deliver appropriately?
- Did actual policy making pursue the goals of the Lisbon strategy to a sufficient extent?
- Have there been any trade-offs between the various policy objectives of the Lisbon Strategy?
- How have the regions and cities been exposed to trade-offs between the Lisbon goals?
- Under what conditions can an overarching EU strategy deliver effectively?
- What is the supportive environment for such EU strategies?

### 4.1.3 Target group

The target group for the interviews included those politicians, civil servants and practitioners, who were involved in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. For practical reasons, the members of the LMP working group were contacted first and asked to identify further interview partners in selected case study regions.

### 4.1.4 Selection of case study regions

The sample of interview partners was identified based on the following criteria:

- **Geographic balance** across EU Member States and regions
- **Thematic balance** across three thematic pillars:
  1. social
  2. economic

### 3. environmental

- **Number of LMP working group members** in 2009 (to help identify appropriate interview partners).

An overview on the selected case study regions is provided in the following table.

To this end, a list of all Lisbon Monitoring Members was cross checked with the list of all “active” LMP working group members in 2009. These members were classified based on the working group to which they belonged in 2009. While the working groups were structured according to the four Lisbon Priorities, in the context of this study, however, only 3 thematic pillars are used (1. economic, 2. social. 3 environmental). The table below provides a simple approximation of the method used to reclassify the WG members into the 3 pillars

<b>Lisbon Priorities (old)</b>	<b>Thematic pillars (new)</b>
P1: Innovation and Research,	Economic
P2: SMEs, better regulation,	Economic
P3: Human Resources, including labour markets,	Social
P4: Energy and Environment.	Environmental

Preference was given to those case study regions where most LMP WG members were available (yellow rows). Moreover, in order to thematically and geographically balance this selection, additional case study regions were also selected (see Table 1, green rows).

A full table with all potential case study regions is included in annex 4.3

The final selection provided for 60 interviews in 22 case study regions. In each region, 2-3 interviews were foreseen. Thematically, 9 case study regions focused more strongly on the economic pillar, 8 regions on the social pillar and 5 regions on the environmental pillar. 40 interviews were carried out under the responsibility of Metis while Naider carried out 20 interviews due to the need for specific linguistic skills.

**Table 1: Proposed selection of case studies for in-depth interviews**

Key data			Lisbon Priority				Case study focus			No.
Country	LMP Member	number of LMP WG Members 2009	1	2	3	4	Econ.	Social	Envir.	interv.
Austria	Steiermark (Styria)	4	1	1	1	1	1			3
Belgium	Vlaanderen (Flanders)	4	1	1	1	1	1			2
Cyprus	Union of Cyprus Municipalities (Ένωση *ήμων Κύπρου)	0					1			2
Czech Republic	Liberecký kraj (Liberec Region)	2	1		1			1		3
Denmark	Næstved (Næstved Municipality)	1			1			1		3
France	Dunkerque	4	1	1	1	1			1	3
Germany	München (City of Munich)	0					1			3
Germany	Saarland	0						1		3
Greece	(Prefectural Authority of Drama-Kavala-Xanthi) *ράμας-Καβάλας-Ξάνθης	4	1	1	1	1			1	3
Hungary	Észak-alföldi régió (Great Plain Region)	4		2	1	1	1			3
Italy	Piemonte	3	1	1		1		1		3
Italy	Puglia (Apulia Region)	1	1				1			2
Netherlands	Delft	1	1				1			3
Poland	Łódź (City of Lodz)	3		1	1	1		1		3
Poland	Województwo Kujawsko-Pomorskie (Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodship)	3	1	1	1		1			2
Portugal	Tavira	0					1			2
Romania	Brasov	4	1	1	1	1			1	3
Slovakia	Košický kraj (Košice Region)	4	1	1	1	1		1		3

Key data			Lisbon Priority				Case study focus			No.
Country	LMP Member	number of LMP WG Members 2009	1	2	3	4	Econ.	Social	Envir.	interv.
Slovenia	Skupnost občin Slovenije (Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia)	0						1		3
Spain	Catalunya	4	1	1	1	1			1	3
Sweden	Solna	3	1		2			1		2
United Kingdom	Lancashire	1				1			1	3
		<b>50</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60</b>

 selected due to high number of LMP working group members

 selected to ensure geographic and thematic balance

### **4.1.5 Conducting the interviews**

The interviews were conducted in the form of telephone interviews, based on **interview guidelines**. More than 70 persons were contacted in total. It was at times difficult to identify the people responsible within the various administrations and to obtain final consent for the telephone interviews. Respondents were ensured that all information would be treated as confidential and that the results would only be presented in a synthetic manner.

Furthermore, rather than sending out a questionnaire which is filled out autonomously by the respondents, we preferred to carry out the interviews ourselves based on common guidelines. This gave us the opportunity to obtain more context-based information and allowed us to immediately ask for more clarification or to go into more depth, as and when required.

**The working-languages for the interviews** were, for the most part, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. A common **reporting format** ensured that the interviews provided comparable information.

An analysis of the interview responses is presented in this report.

## **4.2 Interview Guidelines**

The following interview guidelines are structured along seven thematic blocks of questions:

1. Identification of interviewees (to be completed before the interview)
2. Involvement in the Lisbon Strategy
3. Local coherence and trade-offs with EU strategies
4. Policy tools and delivery
5. Multi-level Governance
6. Challenges
7. Conclusion

Block no. 1 should be completed by the interviewer beforehand based on desk-research and during the information obtained while contacting the interview-partner.

Block no. 2 contains introductory questions to make the interviewees feel comfortable with the conversation context.

Within block nos. 2 to no. 7 the interviewees were required to answer 2-3 thematic questions per block. Each interviewee was generally asked to answer the questions based on his or her own experience, sector or function. Where attribution to one of the

3 thematic pillars (economic, social, environmental) were possible, the interviewee was specifically asked to answer with respect to the thematic pillar in question.

Block no. 7 helped to identify critical issues, where the interviewees wish to see further exchange or action by the CoR.

The interviewers were asked to carefully listen to the answers of the interviewees and to add additional questions related to the answers. In cases where the responses to the question were too brief, additional sub-questions (stated in the interview guidelines) were also to be asked.

**Table 2: Interview guidelines for in-depth interviews**

Operative aspect	Guiding questions and potential sub-questions
<b>1. Identification of interviewees</b> <i>(to be completed before the interview)</i>	1) Name, Organisation 2) Administrative level (EU, national, regional, local, other) 3) Contact address 4) Type of stakeholder (politician, civil servant, fractioned, other) 5) Thematic pillar (social, economic, environmental)
<b>2. Involvement in Lisbon Strategy</b>	6) How have you been involved in the process of implementing the Lisbon Strategy? <i>a) Function and specific responsibilities</i> <i>b) In policy design, implementation or evaluation</i> <i>c) On which topics</i> 7) Did the Lisbon Strategy play an effective role in your daily work?
<b>3. Local coherence and trade-offs with EU Strategies</b>	8) Starting from you experience with the Lisbon Strategy, did you notice any inconsistency between your local/regional priorities and objectives and those set by the Lisbon Strategy? <i>a) In what areas?</i> <i>b) What kind of trade-offs existed (e.g. between economic and social goals etc.)</i> 9) If yes, what consequences did these inconsistencies have for the delivery of the Lisbon Strategy? 10) Did such inconsistency also exist with respect to national level (e.g. as set out in the National Reform Programme?) <i>a) In what areas?</i>

Operative aspect	Guiding questions and potential sub-questions
<b>4. Policy tools and delivery</b>	<p>11) Based on your experience, what were the main obstacles to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in your thematic field?  <i>a) E.g. resources, coordination, missing commitment?</i></p> <p>12) What policy tools do you consider most relevant to local and regional actors for achieving the Lisbon objectives?  <i>a) E.g. formal competences, financing tools, monitoring tools etc.?</i>  <i>b) What tools should play a greater role in future?</i></p> <p>13) Under what conditions can an EU strategy such as the Lisbon Strategy be effectively delivered?  <i>a) What is a supportive environment for this type of Strategy?</i>  <i>b) How should this type of strategy be co-ordinated?</i></p>
<b>5. Multi-level Governance</b>	<p>14) How well developed is multi-level governance in your country for the implementation of overarching EU Strategies (such as the Lisbon Strategy, Europe 2020 etc.)  <i>a) Is the approach more top-down or bottom up?</i>  <i>b) Are there appropriate coordination mechanisms?</i>  <i>c) How are the LRAs involved?</i>  <i>d) Do LRAs feel committed to such strategies?</i></p> <p>15) What needs to be done to strengthen the MLG approach in the implementation of EU Strategies in your thematic field?</p>
<b>6. Challenges</b>	<p>16) What do LRAs need to play a greater role in the implementation of EU Strategies?</p> <p>17) What are the main issues to be addressed when designing a new strategy?</p>
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<p>18) On which Lisbon-related questions would you like to see further exchange with other stakeholders in the EU?</p> <p>19) What kind of Lisbon-related activities do you expect from the CoR in future?</p>

### 4.3 Reporting format

The reporting format filled in by the interviewer and sent back to the drafting team included a matrix consisting of the following elements:

*Table 3: Reporting format for in-depth interviews (schematic representation)*

<b>Operative aspect</b>	<b>Answers to guiding questions</b> (descriptive)	<b>Remarks of interviewer</b> (interpretative)
<b>1. Thematic block no. 1</b>	Answer to question 1 ... Answer to question 2 ... Answer to question 3 ... ...	.... .... ....
<b>2. Thematic block no. 2</b>	...	...
...	...	...
...	...	...

While the interviewee's answers to the guiding questions were reported in column no. 2, the interviewer was also able to add personal remarks to each question. In this way, the reported information was clearly separated from the interviewer's own judgments. Furthermore, it was also possible to explain the reliability and validity of the findings in more detail in the 'remarks' column.

### 4.4 Glossary

- ▶ **Europe 2020:** The EU will soon devise a new strategy for the period beyond 2010. This new strategy should enable the EU to make a full recovery from the crisis, and help speed up the move towards a greener, more sustainable, and more innovative economy. The EU 2020 will build on the achievements of the Lisbon strategy since its 2005 re-launch, which focused on growth and jobs, but will also address some of the Lisbon strategy's shortcomings. The Commission has drafted an evaluation document of the Lisbon strategy for this purpose and will shortly present a formal proposal for the new strategy. The public consultation on the future EU 2020 strategy closed on 15 January 2010.
- ▶ **European Economic Recovery Plan:** is an answer which the European Commission prepared in response to the economic crisis in December 2008. Encompassing several short and long-term measures, this plan foresees the coordination of national budgetary stimulus packages and amounts to around € 200 bn (1.5 % of EU GDP) within national budgets (€170 bn) and EU/EIB budgets (€30 bn). The plan will provide a strong stimulus to the economy

through public spending and competitiveness measures in the four priority areas of the Lisbon strategy. However, although EU local and regional authorities will be getting involved in the quick and full implementation of the spending measures under the Recovery Plan, the European recovery plan does not focus explicitly on the regions or the local and regional authorities.

- ▶ **Four priorities** (as set by the 2006 Spring European Council and confirmed in 2008) are (1) knowledge and innovation; (2) unlocking business potential, especially of SMEs, (3) investing in people and modernising the labour market; and (4) climate change and energy. **High-level guidelines** (Integrated Guidelines, Spring European Councils priorities and a broad-based innovation strategy for the EU) tend to fail to directly address all actors in the same way (the Commission, Member States, regional and local level).
- ▶ **Global financial crisis** originated following the liquidity crisis in the US banking system in 2007 and has quickly spread to the global financial markets. As this crisis restricts the flow of finance to companies and households it is affecting cities and regions in many ways: Less business investment and lower household, falling economic activity and a decline in economic growth.
- ▶ **Lisbon Strategy:** aims to increase the EU's competitiveness, building on the social, economic and environmental pillars, as specified by the European Council's Integrated Guidelines.
- ▶ **Inconsistency** arises for a variety of different reasons: At EU level, the overall strategy was integrated horizontally, but not vertically (on all levels); furthermore, the NRPs were prepared in a close partnership between the EC and the Member States, but in many countries LRAs were not sufficiently involved in the drafting of the National Reform Programmes. In addition, National Reform Programmes were seen as being reform programmes prepared by the national governments, rather than setting out which initiatives the Member States were taking at local, regional and national level to meet the strategy's targets.
- ▶ **Multi-level governance** in the context of designing and implementing the Lisbon Strategy provides regional and local actors with additional access points and more channels of representation. It thus offers formal and informal opportunities for stakeholders to express their own interests.
- ▶ **National Reform Programmes** (NRP) are developed by the Member States in order to respond to the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs, with the aim of delivering the goals of the Lisbon Strategy. The programmes cover a three-year period and the Member States produce annual reports on the implementation of their National Reform Programmes, the so-called National Progress Reports (in some Member States also called "Implementation Report").
- ▶ **Policy tools** are the tools best suited to pursue the Strategy's priorities and objectives, as set by the European Council for 2006-2010. At present, the

only direct resources for the Lisbon Strategy are the Structural funds, although the programming period for the Structural Funds has not been synchronized with the Lisbon Strategy and the set of priorities. The allocation of resources has so far only been linked via earmarking. **A variety of policy tools** are used to implement the Lisbon Strategy: e.g. regulations, “framework directives”, co-regulatory mechanisms, social dialogue, structural funding, action programmes, guidelines, recommendations, territorial pacts, research framework programme, CIP etc.

- ▶ **Subsidiarity:** In this respect, the key question is how much of action relating to a certain priority needs to be taken at European level and which areas would be better handled at national, regional or local level. LRAs have a certain interest in developing their own policies and tools to address their specific challenges and opportunities.
- ▶ **The Committee of the Regions:** is the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives. The mission of its 344 members from all 27 EU Member States is to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council are obliged to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the EU Court of Justice if its rights are infringed or it believes that an EU law violates the subsidiarity principle or fails to respect regional or local powers.