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RESEARCH FOR REGI COMMITTEE - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE COMMISSION

IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

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REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS
Abstract

This in-depth analysis, requested by the European Parliament’s Committee on Regional Development (REGI), focuses on technical assistance (TA) activities at the initiative of the Commission (EC) (Article 58 of the Common Provision Regulation or CPR) and aims to shed some light on the historical background of its principles and implementation, as well as on the current relationship with the management of TA activities when a Member State is facing temporary budgetary difficulties (Article 25 of the CPR). At the time of writing, the Commission has presented a proposal concerning a new ‘TA programme’ (i.e. the Structural Reform Support Programme), and this analysis also provides some preliminary considerations of this initiative, especially as regards the amendment of Article 25 of the CPR and the transfer of TA resources.
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1. THE CONCEPT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The term ‘technical assistance’ has been widely used by international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in a sense that has been summarised as: ‘the transfer or adaptation of ideas, knowledge, practices, technologies, or skills to foster economic development’\(^1\). In recent years the term ‘technical cooperation’ has also been used, in a sense similar to that of TA but describing a broader strategy and implying a more equal relationship between countries (a case in point being the OECD\(^2\)).

At the EU level, the Financial Regulation and its rules of application define TA as the support and capacity-building activities necessary for the implementation of a programme or an action, in particular preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, audit and control activities\(^3\). In the context of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), TA supports, among other measures, the institutional strengthening and administrative capacity-building for the effective management of the Funds\(^4\). The concept was introduced in the Structural Funds regulations in 1988 and has always implied activities at the initiative of either the Commission or the Member States (MS). However, in the 2007-2013 programming period regulations introduced a clearer differentiation of these two types of technical assistance.

The sections that follow provide more detailed information on the evolution of TA between the different reforms of the Structural Funds, since 1988 and up to the current programming period (2014-2020).

2. HISTORICAL AND LEGISLATIVE EVOLUTION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ESI FUNDS

The information available on TA in the context of the Structural Funds is highly fragmented. The concept appeared for the first time and in a broad sense with the 1988 reform of the then three existing Structural Funds, i.e. the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Guidance Section (EAGGF Guidance Section). Until 2006 the regulations did not clearly separate TA at the initiative of the Commission from TA at the initiative of the MS; the main distinction made was based on the allocation and management of resources within or outside the programming documents. In the 2007-2013 programming period, two distinct articles were introduced into the regulations, clearly differentiating TA activities at the initiative of the Commission and those at the initiative of the MS. From this period on, the scope of TA was significantly enlarged and more types of eligible actions were added.

2.1. Technical Assistance from 1988 to 1993

The first reform of the Structural Funds took place in 1988 and was triggered by the enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal, and by the Single European Act. The reform aimed to redefine the tasks of the Structural Funds and to improve their effectiveness and coordination, and thus introduced a certain number of innovations - for

\(^{1}\) GSDRC, Changing approaches to technical assistance, April 2009.

\(^{2}\) The OECD, for example, defines technical cooperation as ‘the provision of know-how in the form of personnel, training, research and associated costs’, further stating that ‘technical cooperation is sometimes referred to as technical Assistance’ - see: OECD, DAC Statistical Reporting Directives, 2010.


\(^{4}\) CPR, Article 58.
example the development of 'forms of assistance', including 'support for technical assistance and studies in preparation for operations', with the aim of facilitating greater simplification, monitoring and flexibility in respect of the Funds.

The users of TA were the "national, regional, local authorities and other level bodies" and the Commission. TA was always undertaken in agreement with the Member States concerned and, where appropriate, with the national authorities. The Commission could, using a maximum of 0.3% of the Funds' total allocation, finance studies and technical assistance linked to the joint or coordinated deployment of the Structural Funds, the EIB and the other financial instruments. Besides this 0.3%, the regulations foresaw that an additional 0.5% from the ERDF annual allocation, 0.5% from the ESF annual allocation and 1% from the EAGGF Guidance Section annual allocation could also be spent on TA activities at the initiative of the Commission (for a more detailed presentation of the allocation of TA resources, see text box 1 below).

The 1988 reform came into force on 1 January 1989 and from that moment on, annual reports were prepared on its implementation. The first annual implementation report highlighted the fact that the Commission, in addition to the measures taken in the partnership framework (and implemented by the MS or by regional or local authorities), could undertake, on its own initiative, 'measures to meet needs other than these expressed in the Community Support Frameworks (CSFs) or to respond more efficiently to the requirements of the reform'.

The 1993 annual report, for example, emphasised that 'the possibility of launching technical assistance operations at the initiative of the Commission opened the way for the addition of valid and useful elements which were sometimes indispensable for the functioning of the Commission's regional policies.' It added: 'In this context, the seminars and other information exchange tools (videos, publications), like the general studies and those carried out in the context of the ex ante appraisal and ex post evaluation, have ... proved their value'. The same report stated that technical assistance operations undertaken at the initiative of the Commission increased between 1989 and 1992 and that 'thanks to the experiments conducted at the start of the 1989-1990 programming period, the technical assistance operations reached their cruising speed in 1991', further specifying that 'from that period on, technical assistance played a decisive part in providing 'back-up' for structural operations, especially as regards the evaluation of current programmes and CSFs, forecasts, passing-on of information (meetings, publications, videos), and improvements in the functioning of the services concerned (automation of data transfer, expert exchanges with the Member States, seminars)'. Regarding the ESF, technical

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6 Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2052/88, of 24 June 1988 on the tasks of the Structural Funds and their effectiveness and on coordination of their activities between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments, Article 5(2(e)) and 3).


8 i.e. the bodies involved in the consultations; also referred to in terms of 'partnership'.


13 'The Community Support Frameworks (CSFs) outlined the aid priorities for the Community in relation to what was proposed by the Member States, priorities which were related to the implementation measures of the Operational Programmes or other instruments'. See: John Bachtler and Ivan Turok (eds.), 'The coherence of EU regional policy: contrasting perspectives on the structural funds', Chapter 2: 'The Evolution of the Structural Funds' by Rona Michie and Rona Fitzgerald, Regional Policy and Development Series 17, 1997.
assistance operations undertaken at the initiative of the Commission financed several studies and seminars having the aim of transferring experience in the field of vocational training.\textsuperscript{14}

\section*{2.2 Technical assistance during the 1994-1999 programming period}

The regulations arising from the 1988 reform were revised in 1993. The framework regulation (EEC) No 2081/93\textsuperscript{15} foresaw that all the provisions governing the three then existing Structural Funds should also apply to the new Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). The same regulation already envisaged the future creation of a temporary cohesion financial instrument (i.e. the Cohesion Fund, created in 1994). The coordination regulation (EEC No 2082/93) kept the option of the Commission financing studies and technical assistance linked to the joint or coordinated deployment of the Structural Funds (ERDF, ESF, EAGF) for up to 0.3 \% of the Funds' total allocation. The specific regulations governing the ERDF and ESF kept the allocation for TA at the initiative of the Commission at a limit corresponding to 0.5 \% of those Funds' annual allocation\textsuperscript{16}. For the EAGGF Guidance Section, the allocation was also the same as in the previous programming period, i.e. 1 \% of the annual allocation (EAGGF - Article 8 of EEC No 2085/93). Regarding the newly created Funds, 2 \% of the annual allocation for the FIFG and 0.5 \% of that for the Cohesion Fund could be devoted to TA activities\textsuperscript{17}.

Even though there were no major changes to the principles underlying the Structural Funds, the revised regulations introduced the option for the Commission of using a limited portion of the appropriations, within the programming documents (i.e. CSFs or SPDs\textsuperscript{18}) and subject to the agreement of the Member State concerned to TA activities in certain types of region (e.g. rural areas or declining industrial areas).

A guidance note published by the Commission in 1994 on ‘TA granted under the Community Structural Funds’ provided further and clearer details on the allocation of TA resources and the measures which could be undertaken, at the initiative of either the Member States or the Commission. The information provided in the guidance note can be seen in the text box below.

\begin{itemize}
    \item The Structural Funds for the 1994-99 programming period were governed by 6 regulations (i.e.: a framework regulation, a coordination regulation; a regulation for the ERDF; a regulation for the ESF; a regulation on the EAGGF - Guidance Section; and a regulation on the FIFG).
    \item Council Regulation on the ERDF, \textit{No 2083/1993 (Article 7)}; Council Regulation on the ESF, \textit{No. 2084/1993 (Article 6)}
    \item Council Regulation \textit{No 2080/93} and Council Regulation \textit{No 1164/94}
    \item Expenditure under the Structural Funds was programmed in three types of document: the Single Programming Document (SPD), the Operational Programme (OP) and the Community Support Framework (CSF). SPDs and OPs were drawn up by the national and regional authorities and approved by the Commission. The CSFs described the social and economic context of the country and regions concerned, setting out development priorities and targets, and the OPs translated these CSF priorities for a particular region or sector (see also a full summary by the Commission, on the archived webpage \textit{The programmes: types and financing plans}).
\end{itemize}
Text box 1. Allocation of TA resources 1988-1994 (within and outside the programming documents, i.e. CSFs or SPDs)

A. Within the programming documents (i.e. CSFs or SPDs) and defined through the ‘partnership’

a) At the initiative of the Member States

1. At the level of the CSFs or SPDs
   In order to improve the operation of the CSF or SPD through monitoring or assessment mechanisms, Member States may allocate part of the appropriations under their CSFs or SPDs to technical assistance. **No limit on the amounts of these appropriations** is laid down and, naturally, since these amounts are subject to reprogramming, the procedures to be used are the same as for the other priorities in the CSF or SPD.

2. At operational level
   In order to make assistance more effective, programmes and subprogrammes may include accompanying measures which make use of the resources provided for that purpose within those programmes and subprogrammes.

b) At the initiative of the Commission
   From 1994, **in some regions**, a limited proportion of the appropriations within a CSF or SPD is earmarked for technical assistance measures undertaken at the initiative of the Commission. In view of their origin, such measures may exceptionally be financed by the Commission at the rate of **100 %** and those undertaken for the Commission may also be financed at that rate. The criteria for using these appropriations are determined by common agreement between the Member State and the Commission.

B. Outside the programming documents

General
   The coordination regulation and the ERDF, ESF, EAGGF and FIFG regulations include provisions permitting measures in support of assistance from the Structural Funds to be undertaken at the level of and at the initiative of the Commission. Similar accompanying measures proposed or launched by other bodies (other public authorities, public or private bodies or groups, universities, etc) may also be eligible.

a) Monofund measures
   Technical assistance measures which are the responsibility of a single Directorate-General responsible for one of the Structural Funds are financed in accordance with the relevant rules for each Fund and subject to the availability of funds under it.

b) Multifund measures
   Article 16(2) of the coordination regulation is intended to meet the needs of the Commission as regards technical assistance measures which are the joint responsibility of or coordinated by the various Structural Funds, the EIB and the other financial instruments. Financial resources are no longer centralised as they were in the previous programming period, but are to be derived from the budgetary resources of each Fund.
The 1994 annual report on the Structural Funds, published in 1995, provided some details on the types of measures financed and the amounts allocated to TA at the initiative of the Commission and under the ERDF regulation. TA included mainly horizontal measures ‘in character and intended to define future Community regional policies, to provide information or facilitate exchanges of experience’, including participation in events, organisation of seminars and other ‘one-off measures’. The 1999 annual report summarised TA at the initiative of the Commission, for the entire programming period but only funded by the ERDF and amounting to EUR 87.9 million (see table below).

Table 1. TA at the initiative of the EC, funded by the ERDF - 1994-1999

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation and monitoring</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>26.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional studies</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences, colloquia and seminars</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and publicity measures</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance and facilities</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>124.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>87.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since these are differentiated appropriations, payments do not necessarily correspond to commitments in the same period.


2.3. Technical assistance during the 2000-2006 programming period

For the 2000-2006 programming period, the forms of TA at the initiative of or on behalf of the Commission were more fully specified in Article 23 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, and included innovations such as the exchange of experience and information aimed at the partners, the final beneficiaries of assistance from the Funds and the general public; the installation, operation and interconnection of computerised systems for management, monitoring and evaluation; and improvements in evaluation methods and exchange of information on practices in this field. TA initiatives were subject to a ceiling of 0.25 % of the Structural Funds’ annual allocation (ERDF, ESF, EAGGF Guidance Section and FIFG). Regarding the Cohesion Fund, the amendments to Council Regulation No 1164/94 did not change the possibility of devoting 0.5 % of this Fund’s annual allocation to TA activities (or technical support).

For this period the annual reports followed the same logic as before and short descriptions of TA financing and activities were provided. The 2005 annual report, for example, on the implementation of the Structural Funds mentioned that the Committee on the Development and Conversion of Regions (CDCR) in its role as a management committee, was consulted on proposals for various types of technical assistance measures financed under Article 23 of Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 and that in 2005 a new technical assistance facility was created, i.e. the Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions (JASPERS), and agreed and set up by the Commission and the EIB and in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in order to assist cohesion Member States. The annex to the 2005 annual report specified that the appropriations for ERDF

20 Ibid.
22 The Committee on the Development and Conversion of Regions (CDCR) was one of the committees helping in the implementation of the Structural Funds General Provisions Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999)
and ESF technical assistance were not totally utilised, and provided overall amounts used for TA activities but without specifying if these had been implemented by the Commission directly or by the MS.

Regarding the use of TA in agriculture and rural development, before 2007 TA was financed by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) with levels of support being relatively low and with a ‘close Commission supervision of the way TA funding was used’\(^{24}\). Examples of TA expenditure in agriculture between 2000 and 2006 were the Sapard, Phare and ISPA programmes for the central and eastern European candidate countries\(^{25}\).

### 2.4. Technical assistance during the 2007-2013 programming period

In the 2007-2013 programming period **TA was dealt with under two separate articles** in the general provisions regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006):

- a) **Article 45** on TA at the initiative of the Commission;
- b) **Article 46** on TA at the initiative of the Member States.

For the first time, the general provisions regulation applied only to the ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund, and not to the EAGGF (replaced in 2007 by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - EAGF) or the FIFG. MS were also given full responsibility for their own TA budget and within the limits of the regulations both the Commission (with 0.25 % of the Funds’ annual allocation) and the MS were free to determine how much to devote to TA and which projects/activities could be financed.\(^{26}\)

In accordance with Article 45 on TA at the initiative of the EC, especially its paragraph 2, a **financing decision should be adopted listing the types of actions involving a contribution from the ERDF or the CF**. Therefore, from 2008 on ‘Financing Decisions’ started to be taken regarding TA at the initiative of the Commission and in order to implement the annual work programme regarding technical assistance of the Commission’s Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). The first financing decision, C(2008) 7717,\(^{27}\) indicated that TA at the initiative of the EC could be provided by the ERDF from two distinct budget lines, one dedicated to **administrative TA** and the other to **operational TA**. A distinction between administrative TA and operational TA cannot be found in the regulations, but appears in the budget for the Funds under shared management, which splits TA between two different budget lines:

- a budget line in the administrative chapter; and
- a budget line in the operational chapter of the budget titles concerned.

According to the Commission, the main differences between TA measures having an administrative purpose and those having an operational purpose are as follows:

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\(^{24}\) ECA, Technical assistance: what contribution has it made to agriculture and rural development?, Special Report No 04/2015.

\(^{25}\) Ibid.

\(^{26}\) ECA, Technical assistance: what contribution has it made to agriculture and rural development?, Special Report No 04/2015.

\(^{27}\) C(2008) 7717
In 2009, the Financing Decision C(2009)10623\textsuperscript{28} detailed the administrative and operational actions to be financed by TA at the initiative of the Commission. These actions included:

- the Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA);
- and the Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises (JEREMIE);\textsuperscript{29}
- some activities financed under the Joint Action to Support Micro-finance Institutions in Europe (JASMINE) (i.e. mentoring, advice and administrative support, with a view to helping non-bank microcredit providers reach a high level of quality in terms of governance, risk management and financial performance);\textsuperscript{30} and
- the OECD action ‘Regional innovation policies and regional performance’.\textsuperscript{31}

For the 2007-2013 period and under the responsibility of DG REGIO, EUR 480 million was spent on TA activities. Besides this contribution, DG REGIO also contributed with EUR 8.6 million to the TA activities of the Support Group for Cyprus (SGCY) and the Task Force for Greece (TFGR).\textsuperscript{32}

For the same period and regarding agriculture and rural development, TA at the initiative of the Commission could be financed by the two newly created European agricultural funds, i.e. the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) or the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)\textsuperscript{33}. The rules were not the same in terms of TA funding: the EAFRD could finance TA at the initiative of the Commission up to 0.25 % of its annual budget, but the EAGF did not specify a limit for TA at the initiative of the Commission. In terms of spending, and similarly to what happened in the case of the Structural and Cohesion Funds, the budget for TA on the initiative of the EC was not fully spent between 2007 and 2013. However, there was a clearer division between TA funding at the initiative of the EC and TA funding at the initiative of the MS. The main activities financed in agriculture and rural development were primarily related to external consultancy, networking, evaluations and IT.

Clearer details on the implementation of TA at the initiative of the Commission are provided by DG MARE in its annual reports. Between 2007 to 2013 the main activities financed by DG MARE were conferences, studies, communication and publications, the FARNET Support Unit, information technology, and salaries of non-permanent staff. In 2008\textsuperscript{34}, for example, DG MARE committed a total of EUR 1 416 000 of the EFF TA budget, with EUR 191 000 committed for conferences, EUR 300 000 for studies, EUR 150 000 for communication and...

\begin{itemize}
  \item a) Measures have an \textbf{administrative} purpose if they enhance the Commission’s capacities to implement the programmes. This could cover either external personnel at the headquarters and the related administrative expenditure, or other administrative expenditure directly related to the programmes, for instance, the provision of information and training for EU officials related to the implementation of the Funds.
  \item b) Measures have an \textbf{operational} purpose if they directly contribute to the implementation and development of the policy. This is the case for assistance and support provided to the Member States, but could also be so for other measures such as, for instance, audit, IT tools, studies, evaluations, or dissemination of information and training of the stakeholders in the Member State, if this expenditure contributes to the implementation of the programmes in the Member States or to the assessment and development of the policy.
\end{itemize}
publications, EUR 325 000 for information technology, and EUR 450 000 for salaries of non-permanent staff. From 2009 to 2013 DG MARE committed annually an average of 3.4 million for TA activities (i.e. 2009 - EUR 3 564 291; 2010 - EUR 3 226 082; 2011 - EUR 3 874 825; 2012 - EUR 2 892 347.69; and 2013 - EUR 3.48 million).\(^{35}\)

### 2.5. Technical assistance during the 2014-2020 programming period

The 2014-2020 legislative framework establishes common provisions on TA to support the implementation of programmes and projects under the ESI Funds\(^{36}\) (i.e. CPR, Article 58 and Article 59) and as used to happen before 2007. TA measures at the initiative of the Commission are listed in Article 58 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 and include, as in the previous programming period, *assistance for project preparation and appraisal, studies, evaluations, expert reports, actions to disseminate information and networking.*

During the negotiations of the 2014-2020 legislative framework, the *European Parliament* supported the Commission proposal regarding TA at the initiative of the Commission (Article 58), and introduced the paragraph on the ‘dissemination of good practices in order to assist Member States to strengthen the capacity of the relevant partners referred to in Article 5 (e.g. urban authorities, economic and social partners, NGOs, etc) and their umbrella organisations’.

In addition to the 2007-2013 TA actions, the 2014-2020 provisions have introduced *certain innovations*, in particular: **support for institutional strengthening and administrative capacity-building**; and **measures to identify, prioritise and implement structural and administrative reforms in response to economic and social challenges in certain Member States.** Furthermore, Article 25 of the CPR states that a Member State with temporary budgetary difficulties may request that part of the resources provided under Article 59 (i.e. technical assistance at the initiative of the Member States) and programmed in accordance with Fund-specific rules may be transferred to technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission *(for more details on Article 25, see paragraph 2.6.1 below).*

In terms of **management mode**, it is specified that TA at the initiative of the Commission can be ‘implemented directly by the Commission or indirectly, by other entities (e.g. the EIB) and persons other than Member States in accordance with Article 60 of the Financial Regulation’. Furthermore, Article 58 of the CPR provides **examples of TA measures**, which may include the intervention of the EIB, such as project preparation and appraisal (Article 58(2)(a)); evaluations, expert reports, statistics and studies (Article 58(2)(e)); and the strengthening of national and regional capacity regarding investment planning, needs assessment, preparation, design and implementation of financial instruments, joint action plans and major projects (Article 58(2)(j)).

According to CPR Article 118, which only applies to the ERDF, the ESF and the Cohesion Fund, the resources allocated to technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission in the current programming period amount to **0.35 % of the Funds' annual allocation, after deduction for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**\(^{37}\) and aid for the most deprived (0.25 % of the annual allocation in the previous programming period). The budget allocated to these types of measures is not implemented within the framework of shared management, is not subject to thematic concentration, and is excluded for the

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\(^{35}\) DG MARE - 2007-2013 Annual Reports

purpose of calculating the performance reserve\textsuperscript{38}. Additionally, in terms of cofinancing rates, TA measures implemented at the initiative of, or on behalf of, the Commission may be financed at the rate of 100% (CPR Article 60).

The key TA activities to be carried out by DG REGIO (i.e. TA at the initiative of the Commission) in 2014-2020 are: as follows:\textsuperscript{39}

- **5 %** of the budget allocation is being spent on support to policy analysis and development to prepare the policy post 2014-2020. This comprises several studies, data collection, round table discussions with stakeholders, and seminars on the future of cohesion policy;
- **58 %** of the budget has been allocated to provide support for: a) effective implementation of operational programmes; b) financial instruments; and c) administrative capacity-building measures. The last-named are currently built around five main clusters: 1) public procurement action plan; 2) state aid action plan; 3) anti-fraud and anti-corruption measures; 4) professionalisation of the management of the funds and training; and 5) exchange of good practices via ‘TAIEX REGIO PEER 2 PEER’;
- **3 %** of the budget is earmarked for urban and territorial development, to contribute to the territorial cohesion of the EU, including the Urban Development Network;
- **15 %** of the budget is allocated to the evaluation and performance network and to communication and awareness raising, to ensure and demonstrate the added value of cohesion policy and ensure integration with EU governance mechanisms;
- In order to respond to challenges ahead, DG REGIO also has to demonstrate an increased capacity to streamline its working methods and processes and to further improve its operational effectiveness and the quality of key internal processes. Part of the TA budget also covers audit activities in relation to the implementation of the Operational Programmes (OPs).

**Source:** Commission, DG REGIO contribution to this briefing, April 2016

Overall, DG REGIO estimates that for **2014 and 2015, EUR 180 million**\textsuperscript{40} have been spent on TA activities (managed by the Commission). Analysis of the latest annual activity reports available for other DGs for 2014 brings to light some more detailed indications as to how the TA budget is spent in coordinated actions, as follows (with examples relating to funding mechanisms):

- **DG REGIO’s** annual activity report for 2014 indicates that expenditure paid under direct management (mainly for operational and administrative technical assistance, for the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund) represented EUR 72.89 million, of which EUR 25.52 million was paid to the EIB, for JASPERS and the Technical Assistance Platform for financial instruments - Horizontal Assistance (FI-Compass\textsuperscript{41}, former FI-TAP). The committed amount for JASPERS in 2014 amounted to EUR 29 million while for the FI-TAP, which is one of the strands of fi-compass, it was EUR 9.24 million.\textsuperscript{42} It is to be noted that the work under Fi-compass is coordinated by DG REGIO, which received cross sub-delegation from the other ESIF DGs. In terms of budget allocation, each ESIF DG under the technical assistance budget allocates resources to Fi-compass;

\textsuperscript{38} ibid. and CPR (recital 23, Article 4, Article 18, Article 20).
\textsuperscript{39} Information provided by DG REGIO, April 2016.
\textsuperscript{40} Information provided by DG REGIO, April 2016.
\textsuperscript{41} fi-Compass is ‘a unique platform for advisory services on financial instruments under the European Structural and Investment funds (ESIF) and microfinance under the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)’ - see Fi-Compass Website.
\textsuperscript{42} DG REGIO Annual activity report - 2014, 2015.
• **DG AGRI’s** annual activity report for 2014\(^43\) states that the overall contribution from the DG AGRI technical assistance budget to ‘fi-compass’ was planned to be **EUR 1.17 million**;

• **DG EMPL’s** annual report for 2014\(^44\) indicates that around **EUR 3 million** was cross-delegated to DG REGIO and was linked to support for effective implementation of ESIF funds in the period 2014-2020. More specifically, resources were dedicated to: (1) an independent external validation assessment of the audit functions of DGs REGIO, EMPL and MARE; (2) the implementation of fi-compass; (3) the development and management of WAVE, the workflow IT tool for the programming period 2014-2020; and (4) the organisation of anti-fraud seminars in four MS.

• **DG MARE’s** annual report for 2014\(^45\) states that DG REGIO ‘received cross sub-delegations from DG MARE in order to administer an independent external validation assessment of the audit functions of DG REGIO, EMPL and MARE, and for the implementation of fi-compass, the technical advisory platform for financial instruments ...’ In 2014, REGIO managed an amount of **EUR 367 942 in commitment appropriations** that was fully implemented. As for the payment appropriations, **EUR 76 376.80 out of EUR 82 942 was consumed**\(^46\) (pp. 83-84).

More specifically, the **operational TA amounts** to be spent by DG REGIO are indicated in the Financing Decisions, which are published on a yearly basis. These Financing Decisions are in adoption of DG REGIO’s work programme,\(^47\) in which TA activities are described. The yearly amounts since 2014 allocated from the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, covering both administrative and operational TA activities, can be found in the table below:

**Table 2. DG REGIO expenditure on technical assistance activities (2014-2016, covering both administrative and operational activities)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>72.166.948,00</td>
<td>73.004.100,00</td>
<td>79.290.000,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion Fund</td>
<td>23.837.840,00</td>
<td>24.423.000,00</td>
<td>25.290.000,00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total DG REGIO,</strong></td>
<td><strong>96.004.788,00</strong></td>
<td><strong>97.427.100,00</strong></td>
<td><strong>104.580.000,00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Drawn up by author on the basis of the financing decisions for 2014/2015/2016 and DG REGIO, April and August 2016 input\(^48\)

The above-mentioned ERDF and CF expenditures support a large number of TA activities including: JASPERS; the annual meetings of the European financial controllers; the design and implementation of the macroregional strategy (MRS) EUSAIR; support for the ‘Economic Magazine - Real Economy’; a public procurement capacity-building programme for authorities managing and implementing ESIF programmes in key countries affected by non-fulfilled EACs on public procurement; knowledge creation and dissemination on approaching anti-corruption in public administration; studies (e.g. a study on migrants in cities, a joint

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\(^43\) DG AGRI Annual report for 2014, 2015, p.163.

\(^44\) DG EMPL Annual activity report for 2014, 2015, p.77.

\(^45\) DG MARE Annual report for 2014, 2015, p. 83.

\(^46\) Note: **Commitment appropriations** are the total cost of legal commitments (contracts, grants, and agreements/decisions) for one budgetary year; **payment appropriations** are the total volume of payments foreseen for one budgetary year based on the legal commitments of that year and earlier years, which are due in the current year.


Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission

OECD/REGIO project); cooperation with the World Bank on implementation of ERDF/CF in Poland; etc\(^{49}\).

As far as the ESF is concerned, ESF TA activities\(^{50}\) were estimated at EUR 25.5 million and EUR 14.7 million for 2014 and 2015 respectively, and include amounts allocated to the FI-Compass Multi-Region Assistance, a convention with the OECD on entrepreneurship, studies, conferences, meetings, networks of experts and working groups, development and maintenance of IT tools, etc.

Even though the amounts appropriated might seem quite high, with a total of 96.0 million in 2014 managed by DG REGIO, in reality the **ceiling** for TA which can be spent is much higher, as can be seen in the table below (e.g. 108 million in 2014 only for DG REGIO):

**Table 3. Ceilings for technical assistance (2014-2020)**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>108,000,000</td>
<td>111,500,000</td>
<td>113,369,000</td>
<td>118,587,131</td>
<td>117,880,246</td>
<td>117,360,406</td>
<td>117,758,362</td>
<td>804,455,145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Commission, DG REGIO

The 2015 Financial Report from DG Budget refers to the fact that following the delayed adoption of operational programmes compared with the initial planning, a number of technical assistance actions supporting the programme implementation, namely communication activities, evaluations and other studies as well as organisation of workshops, were cancelled or postponed to 2016\(^{52}\); however, it is not clear to which TA budget this refers. In addition, the 2015 annual activity report by DG REGIO indicates that around EUR 51.8 million were spent by the EC on ERDF and CF operational and administrative technical assistance actions, including EUR 15 million paid to the EIB for JASPERS.\(^{53}\) It is important to note that **JASPERS might cover the requests from the European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH).** The EIAH was established by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) regulation\(^{54}\) to provide support on the use of technical assistance for project structuring for interested Member States.

### 2.5.1 Technical assistance and Article 25 of the CPR

Article 25 of the CPR relates to the management of TA when a Member State faces temporary budgetary difficulties, and is part of certain measures reinforcing the link between **cohesion policy** and **sound economic governance.** It can also be considered a way of achieving a stable and sustainable financing envelope for the implementation of the TA activities accompanying structural reforms\(^{55}\). Article 25 was proposed by the Commission at a very late stage in the negotiations (September 2013)\(^ {56}\) and the aim was to transfer resources back to the Commission for implementation of measures within the framework of the ESI Funds. This article was supported and endorsed by the European Parliament.

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\(^{49}\) Ibid.


\(^{51}\) 2014-2016- Amounts correspond to the voted budget; 2017-2020- Ceiling for TA is equal to the amounts included in the MFF.


Article 25 states that TA resources provided under Article 59 (i.e. technical assistance at the initiative of the Member States) can be transferred from a Member State with temporary budgetary difficulties to technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission and to ‘measures to identify, prioritise and implement structural and administrative reforms in response to economic and social challenges in Member States’ which meet the conditions set out in Article 24(1)\(^{57}\). Member States should request such a transfer only for one calendar year, and the request should be submitted by 31 January in the year when the transfer is desired to be made. This request shall be accompanied by a proposal to amend the OP or Ops, and corresponding amendments shall be made to the Partnership agreement (PA). The PA shall set out the total amount transferred each year to the Commission (Article 25(3)). A very simplistic comparison could be made between Article 25 of the CPR in the 2014-2020 period, which targets MS in difficulties, and what was introduced in the 1994-1999 programming period for certain regions. At that time the Commission had the possibility to use a limited portion of the MS appropriations for TA activities in certain rural and declining industrial areas.

The Commission’s analysis of the budgetary implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014 indicates that Article 25 was activated by Greece and Cyprus; part of their technical assistance envelope for the 2014-2020 programmes was transferred to the ‘technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission for the implementation of measures linked to administrative reforms in response to economic and social challenges’. Regarding Greece, an amount of EUR 15 million of the 2014 Greek TA budget was transferred from the TA allocation of the Member State (under shared management) to the ESF, ERDF and CF operational technical assistance lines managed by the Commission. Regarding Cyprus, the amount of the transfer was EUR 0.5 million\(^{58}\) in 2014, and it was channelled through the Support Group for Cyprus, covering expert missions, small value contracts (TA of short duration, i.e. not usually more than 30 ‘expert days’), and longer-term contracts (required when a reform project moves from the design to the implementation phase)\(^{59}\). For 2015, the Commission indicates that there was a ‘slight increase at the level of technical assistance transferred to the Commission by Member States by application of Article 25’\(^{60}\) and the ERDF operational technical assistance line managed by the Commission received a transfer of EUR 0.2 million from Cyprus. As of 1 July 2015, the SGCY, together with the TFGR, became part of the newly-created Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS).

Currently, Article 25 of the CPR can only be applied to MS with temporary financial difficulties. However, a possible extension of the geographical scope of this article to all Member States is currently being discussed in the context of the new legislative proposal on the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP).

The objective of the SRSP is ‘to contribute to institutional, administrative and structural reforms in the Member States ... in particular in the context of economic governance processes, including through the assistance for the efficient and effective use of the Union funds’,\(^{61}\) and to support in particular: the (i) Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) issued in the context of the European Semester, and/or other actions related to the implementation of Union law; (ii) the reforms associated with the implementation of economic adjustment programmes for Member States receiving Union financial assistance;


\(^{58}\) Commission, Analysis of the budgetary implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds in 2014, 2015.


\(^{60}\) Commission, Analysis of the budgetary implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds in 2015, 2016.

and (iii) the reforms that Member States undertake at their own initiative in order to achieve sustainable investment, growth and job creation’.  

There are many possible policy areas of intervention, e.g. public financial management, budget process, institutional reform, reform of the justice system, public procurement, education and training, social inclusion, asylum and migration, social welfare systems, public health, etc. There are also several types of action that can be supported, from the provision of experts to collecting data, IT capacity-building, studies, communication projects, and others.

The financial envelope for the SRSP programme is fixed at EUR 142 800 million, **deducted from part of the technical assistance resources at the initiative of the Commission under the ESI Funds** (i.e. EUR 112.233 million from the ESI Funds in general and EUR 30.567 million from the EAFRD in particular). Moreover, additional financing may be voluntarily provided by Member States (and may be taken from the technical assistance resources at the Initiative of the Member States pursuant to Article 25). The programme would run for a period of four years (from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2020), with an interim evaluation report to be provided to the European Parliament and the Council by mid-2019 (with an ex post evaluation by end of December 2021).

Table 4 below shows a breakdown for DG REGIO, with the TA ceiling and the foreseen allocation for the SRSP. If we compare these data with the budget indicated in the Financing Decisions (see table 2), it seems that the allocation to the SRSP programme would not have a significant overall impact on the TA budget managed by DG REGIO.

**Table 4. Use of technical assistance for the 2014-2020 period**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ceiling for Technical Assistance e</strong></td>
<td>108.000.000</td>
<td>111.500.000</td>
<td>115.500.000</td>
<td>132.404.333</td>
<td>136.610.231</td>
<td>141.003.174</td>
<td>145.085.717</td>
<td>890.103.455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SRSP allocation</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.131.000</td>
<td>13.817.202</td>
<td>18.729.985</td>
<td>23.642.768</td>
<td>27.327.355</td>
<td>85.648.310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TA available for REGIO</strong></td>
<td>108.000.000</td>
<td>111.500.000</td>
<td>113.369.000</td>
<td>118.587.131</td>
<td>117.880.246</td>
<td>117.360.406</td>
<td>117.758.362</td>
<td>804.455.145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** EC, DG Regio, June 2016

Some national parliaments, following the scrutiny process, have already issued observations regarding the Commission proposal. The UK and Romania, for example, support the principles and objectives of the proposal, but highlight the following issues related to the way the SRSP is to be financed and its extension to all MS:

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62 Ibid.
63 Remarks: 2014 -2015 (Ceiling for TA is equal to the voted budget) ; 2016 - Ceiling for TA is equal to the voted budget and SRSP allocation covers the amount that was transferred until 6 June 2016; 2017-2020 - Ceiling for TA is equal to the amounts included in the MFF and SRSP allocation shows the budget included in the SRSP Draft Regulation.
64 Ceiling for TA - these are the maximum amounts available to the Commission and not the amounts to be committed and spent.
65 Please consult the scrutiny process, available at: [IPEX database](#)
UK

‘Where new Programmes are financed by deductions from existing budget lines, it is critical to assess the impact on those existing budgets. The Commission judges that support is more effectively delivered through the diversion of existing funds towards a new Programme rather than through better use of existing funds under current arrangements. We assume that the Government agrees with the Commission’s assessment but would welcome a clear statement to that effect.

(…) Support for the Programme will be provided partly through a specific deduction from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The Government has consistently supported the provision of assistance to the agricultural sector through rural development rather than direct payments. We would welcome an analysis from the Minister of the potential impact on the development of a competitive EU agricultural sector of directing funds away from Technical Assistance in rural development and towards support with more general application as proposed by the Commission.

(…) While the maximum ceilings for the respective deductions required to fund the Programme are clear, the levels of residual funding under the depleted budget lines are not evident. It would be helpful if the Minister could provide that information, including any direct impact upon UK structural and rural development funding receipts.’

Source: UK Parliament - Documents considered by the European Scrutiny Committee on 6 January 2016

Romania

‘The Commission’s assumption is that support is delivered more efficiently by redirecting the existing funds towards the new Programme, rather than turning the currently existing funds to good account. It also draws attention to the fact that such an approach is contrary to the principle according to which new mechanisms should not be created before the functioning of the existing ones has been improved.

(…) More clarification is needed regarding the criteria linked to the emergency, the extent and the depth of the problems which the respective Member States identify.

(…) The Programme is conceived to assist those Member States which need assistance in the field of administrative capacity and economic governance. This fact and also the fact that a basic argument of the initiative is the success of the support group for Greece and Cyprus may mean that some Member States which consider themselves not to be in such a difficult situation will be reticent as regards the participation demand. Such a reaction is so predictable that doubts arise as to the EU’s conception of offering this Programme to all Member States.’

Source: Romania, Chamber of Deputies

On 16 March 2016 the EESC issued an opinion on the SRSP, regretting the fact that the total budget allocated to this programme falls far short of what is needed for macroeconomic policy reforms in the EU and calling for a balance to be struck between financial needs in the area of technical assistance in the ESIF and those in the area of technical support for the SRSP. The EESC called for future reforms of the EU’s Multiannual Financial Framework in order to create a self-supporting structural reform support programme. Also, in view of the division of powers and responsibilities applying in each Member State and the Country Specific Recommendations often addressed to local and regional authorities, it considered that the programme must be open to local and regional authorities, which should be directly involved in putting together the structural reform project in question.

66 The final opinion was adopted on 9 March 2016 (only available in RO).
67 EESC opinion on the Structural Reform Support Programme, 16 March 2016
The EESC regretted that the list of indicators looked insufficient, requiring both updating and incorporation of the existing indicators from the ESIF. For the EESC, the SRSP could make use of the current existing monitoring mechanisms for the ESI Funds, in order to ensure higher quality monitoring and evaluation, better coordination with the ESIF and the best value for money from the control mechanisms already in operation. In conclusion, the EESC considered that while useful, SRSP measures can only be palliative.

More recently, on 7 April, the CoR adopted its opinion on the SRSP, also stressing also that the programme must be open to local and regional authorities and that it should be considered a pilot programme. It took the view that financing the SRSP through the transfer of funds allocated to technical assistance under the ESI Funds can only be a temporary solution. Furthermore, the CoR marked its opposition to the SRSP funding arrangements, which pave the way for subordinating cohesion policy to the European Semester exercise. The CoR stressed that ‘an evaluation would be needed in time’, in order to decide whether it would be beneficial to make it permanent, and, if so, whether establishing a fund of own resources to support structural reforms is necessary, feasible and desirable. The CoR also proposed a single strategic document to set out the EU’s priorities for improving administrative capacity at all levels of government, while avoiding overlapping with existing technical assistance programmes.68

Questions for further reflection:

- **Is there a need to keep the current level of resources as regards TA at the initiative of the Commission?** Or is this a way of giving extra budgetary flexibility to the Commission to manage unforeseen situations and pilot programmes, as is the case with the SRSP?
- When TA resources are not committed, what are the budgetary mechanisms that apply? Are appropriations transferred?
- Is there a need for more detailed reporting on the use of TA resources at the disposal of the Commission? How could the contribution of TA at the initiative of the Commission be evaluated and budgetary transparency increased?
- Is there a need to clarify concepts such as: administrative TA, operational TA, TA Monofund measures and TA Multifund measures?
- Given the ambitious scope of the SRSP, are the planned resources enough?
- The SRSP is planned to be complementary to the existing TA under ESI Funds, but how will coordination be ensured between TA at the initiative of the Commission and the TA already planned in the MS (and allocated under their financial envelopes)?

3. EVALUATION REPORTS ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Although TA has been frequently used in the context of cohesion policy since 1988, a global analysis of its contributions and role has never been made. On a sectoral level, there are some evaluations available: in 2013, for example, the JASMINE Technical Assistance Facility was evaluated at the request of the Commission69.

At that time, JASMINE was 95 % funded by the DG REGIO TA budget (i.e. TA at the initiative of the Commission) and 5 % cofinanced by the European Investment Fund (EIF). For the period 2008-2013, this facility had an overall financial envelope of around EUR 6 million and was managed by the EIF on behalf of DG REGIO, providing two types of services: technical assistance to selected microcredit providers, and business development tools and services

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68 Cor Opinion Number: **CDR 1214/2016**, 7 April 2016.
for the entire microcredit sector. The report evaluated JASMINE as a success story, with strong added value, and recommended its continuation in the future. A more recent study\(^70\), commissioned by the EP, highlighted the complementarity of this facility with EU financing programmes, such as financial instruments under the European Progress Microfinance Facility and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). For the 2014-2020 period, the generic technical assistance for microfinance is part of the fi-compass advisory platform, i.e. the new TA platform dedicated to financial instruments, which receives cross-financing from several DGs.

Another example of evaluation of TA activities is the 2012 report\(^71\) on the Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions - JASPERS, which emphasised its positive impact on the development of comprehensive and mature applications for funding.

In 2015, the ECA issued a report on the contribution of TA to agriculture and rural development. Many of its points related mainly to Member States’ implementation of TA; however, some questions are relevant for the TA which is directly managed by the Commission, namely the fact that the legislative framework does not clearly define TA and that there is a need to establish a suitable performance framework for TA and to properly assess the TA needs of the Commission (with a mechanism to set objectives and measure progress towards them). The ECA report highlights that in the absence of a ‘suitable performance framework’, neither the Commission nor the Member States can ‘demonstrate how well TA has contributed to the general policy objectives of the CAP’.\(^72\)

Furthermore, without a clear distinction between operational costs and administrative costs (e.g. payroll, IT), and without clarity as to the nature of activities that TA is supposed to cover, budgetary transparency is reduced and scrutiny of how budgets are spent is hindered. The same report also confirms that TA spending was significantly lower than the ceilings allowed by the regulations for the 2007-2013 period.

Another 2015 ECA report on the delivery of TA to Greece indicates that TA activities were financed from a number of budget lines (notably within the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the Commission’s administrative budget), and that this fact did not permit the ECA to ‘precisely determine the total commitments (and therefore total potential cost) of TA activities in Greece’. In the context of public administration reform, the same report highlighted that the financing possibilities offered by the Structural Funds were not fully exploited for TA purposes: the ECA estimated that commitments to TA activities under centralised direct management totalled EUR 11.2 million in 2011-2013.\(^73\)

The 2014 activity report of the Task Force for Greece (TFGR)\(^74\) highlighted that ‘structural reforms and the full use of EU funds are both critical to restoring Greece to a path of sustained economic growth, competitiveness and employment’, and that these two objectives are central to the TFGR activities. The programme of technical assistance coordinated by TFGR comprised, for example the, improvement of the absorption rate for the structural funds for the 2007-2013 programming period and the preparation of the Partnership Agreement.

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\(^71\) Commission, JASPERS Evaluation, December 2012.

\(^72\) ECA special report: Technical assistance: what contribution has it made to agriculture and rural development? 2015.

\(^73\) ECA special report: More attention to results needed to improve the delivery of technical assistance to Greece, 2015.

As far as Cyprus is concerned, TA resources are funding the Support Group for Cyprus (SGCY), which was launched by the EC in 2013. Despite centralised technical assistance reserves of the ESI Funds, Cyprus has transferred part of its ESIF technical assistance funds for 2014-2020 to the Commission for purposes of financing individual TA projects (Article 25 of the CPR). Between January and December 2014 and from these two sources of TA funding, a total of EUR 1.4 million was committed through the SGCY to TA activities for Cyprus.

The latest report available, covering SGCY activities for January-December 2014 and published in 2015, indicates that the scope and intensity of TA provision increased with the evolution of the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus. Certain trends were observed, such as the consolidation of TA in areas including budgetary framework and public financial management, healthcare and welfare. In addition, particular progress was achieved in the areas of revenue administration (linked to revenue collection capacity and the fight against tax fraud and evasion), insolvency and energy. Contrary to the case of Greece, the areas supported by TA funding in 2014 are not directly linked to implementation of the ESI Funds.

4. CONCLUSION

Since its introduction in 1988, TA spending has been significantly lower than the ceilings allowed by the regulations.

As TA is a cross-cutting area of spending for which there is no single clear definition it is difficult to make a detailed assessment of its importance and contribution to supporting institutional strengthening and administrative capacity building for the effective management of the ESI Funds.

One can argue that TA provisions respond to the need for flexibility in the Union budget available to the Commission and that the spending on TA is included in the EC DGs’ Annual Activity Reports in broad figures and data can be collected from other sources, for example from the EU yearly budget reports. However, the figures appear in a very fragmented way and are presented by DG. As TA funding can be provided from different budget lines and used in a flexible manner it is difficult to obtain final amounts or a clear understanding of the TA budgetary mechanisms and activities financed.

TA can be considered an enabler of change and its full benefits might only become evident in the future and when activities and reforms have been fully implemented. For this reason, planning, coordination and transparency of TA activities should be ensured at all stages and the European Parliament’s role in scrutinising TA activities should be enhanced. More broadly, the role of TA in contributing to institutional, administrative and structural reforms in the Member States should be carefully monitored so that transparency and legitimacy can be safeguarded.

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76 ECA special report: Technical assistance: what contribution has it made to agriculture and rural development?, 2015.
5. MAIN REFERENCES

- Council Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 of 24 June 1988 on the tasks of the Structural Funds and their effectiveness and on coordination of their activities between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments


- Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/93, of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 on the tasks of the Structural Funds and their effectiveness and on coordination of their activities between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments

- Council Regulation (EEC) No 2082/93 of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 as regards coordination of the activities of the different Structural Funds between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments


- European Commission (1994), Technical assistance granted under the Community Structural Funds, Guide

- European Commission (1995), Technical assistance and the Structural Funds, Brochure

- REGULATION (EU) No 1255/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2011 establishing a Programme to support the further development of an Integrated Maritime Policy


## ANNEX. TA LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY PER PROGRAMMING PERIOD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming Period</th>
<th>Main Provisions</th>
<th>Ceiling of TA Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994-1999</td>
<td>Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/93, of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 on the tasks of the Structural Funds [ERDF, ESF, EAGGF] and their effectiveness and on coordination of their activities between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments Article 5 - Forms of assistance Council Regulation (EEC) No 2082/93 of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 4253/88 laying down provisions for implementing Regulation (EEC) No 2052/88 as regards coordination of the activities of the different Structural Funds between themselves and with the operations of the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments Article 16 - Specific Provisions</td>
<td>0.3 % of the Funds’ total allocation for coordinated actions plus 0.5 % from the ERDF annual allocation, 0.5 % from the ESF annual allocation and 1 % from the EAGGF Guidance Section annual allocation and 2 % of the FIFG...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming Period</td>
<td>Main Provisions</td>
<td>Ceiling of TA Allocation</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Council Regulation (EEC) No 2083/93 of 20 July 1993 amending Regulation (EEC) No 4254/88 laying down provisions for implementing Regulation (EEC) No 2052/898 as regards the European Regional Development Fund</strong>&lt;br&gt;Article 7 - Preparatory, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation measures</td>
<td><strong>annual allocation. In addition, 0.5 % of the Cohesion Fund annual allocation could be devoted to TA activities (or technical support).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Council Regulation (EC) No 1164/94 of 16 May 1994 establishing a Cohesion Fund</strong>&lt;br&gt;Article 3 - Eligible measures&lt;br&gt;Article 7- Rate of Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2006</td>
<td><strong>Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds</strong> [ERDF, ESF, EAGGF Guidance Section and FIFG]&lt;br&gt;Article 23 - Technical assistance</td>
<td><strong>Total of 0.25 % of the Funds (i.e. ERDF, ESF, EAGGF Guidance Section and FIFG) respective annual allocation. Regarding the Cohesion Fund 0.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming Period</td>
<td>Main Provisions</td>
<td>Ceiling of TA Allocation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Article 45** - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission  
**Article 46** - Technical assistance of the Member States  
Council Regulation (EC) No 1164/94 of 16 May 1994 establishing a Cohesion Fund  
**Article 3** - Eligible measures  
**Article 7** - Rate of Assistance  
**Council Regulation (EC) No 1290/2005 of 21 June 2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy** (which created two European agricultural funds, i.e. the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), for the financing of market measures, and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), for the financing of rural development programmes)  
**Article 5** - Other financing, including technical assistance  
**Article 66** - Funding Technical Assistance  
**Article 46** - Technical assistance | Total of **0.25 %** of the Funds’ respective annual allocation (ERDF, ESF and CF).  
Separate provisions for agriculture introduced  
No amounts specified for TA at the initiative of the Commission under the EAGF  
**0.25 %** from the EAFRD annual allocation to TA activities at the initiative of the Commission  
**0.8 %** of the EFF annual allocation allocated to technical assistance |
## Main Provisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming Period</th>
<th>Main Provisions</th>
<th>Ceiling of TA Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Article 58 - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission  
Article 59 - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Member States  
Article 25 - Management of technical assistance for Member States with temporary budgetary difficulties  
Article 118 - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission  
Article 51 - Funding technical assistance  
Article 6 - Other expenditure, including technical assistance  
Article 92 - Technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission | **0.35 %** of the Funds’ annual allocation (CPR Art. 118 applying to Cohesion, ERDF and ESF)  
**0.25 %** of the EAFRD allocation  
**1.11 %** applying to the EMFF |

**Source:** Drawn up by author
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

POLICY DEPARTMENT B
STRUCTURAL AND COHESION POLICIES

Role
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