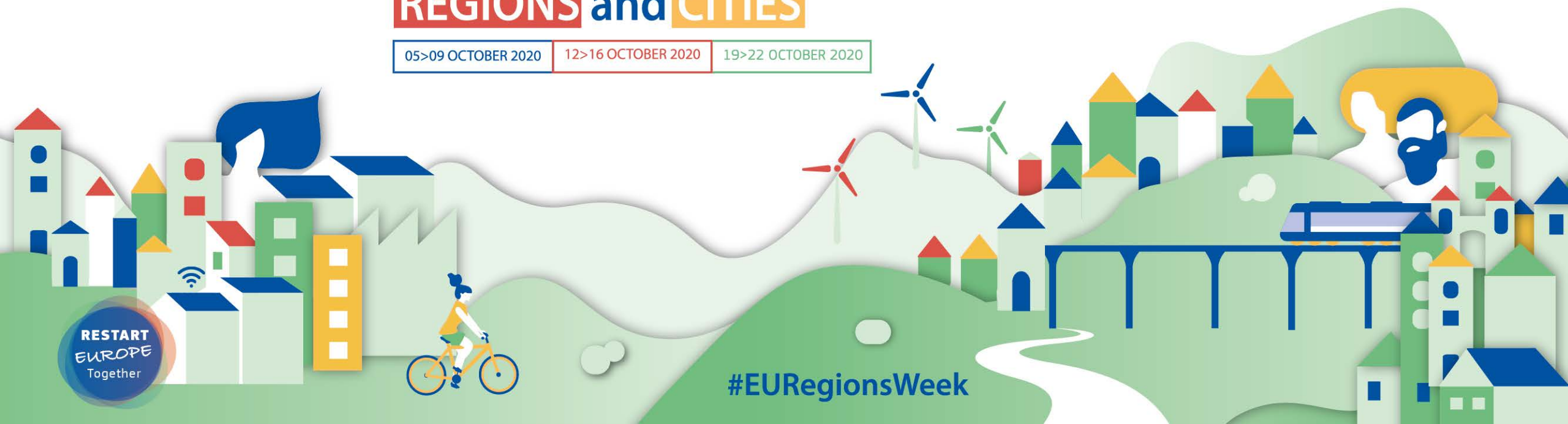18th EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES

05>09 OCTOBER 2020 | 12>16 OCTOBER 2020 | 19>22 OCTOBER 2020
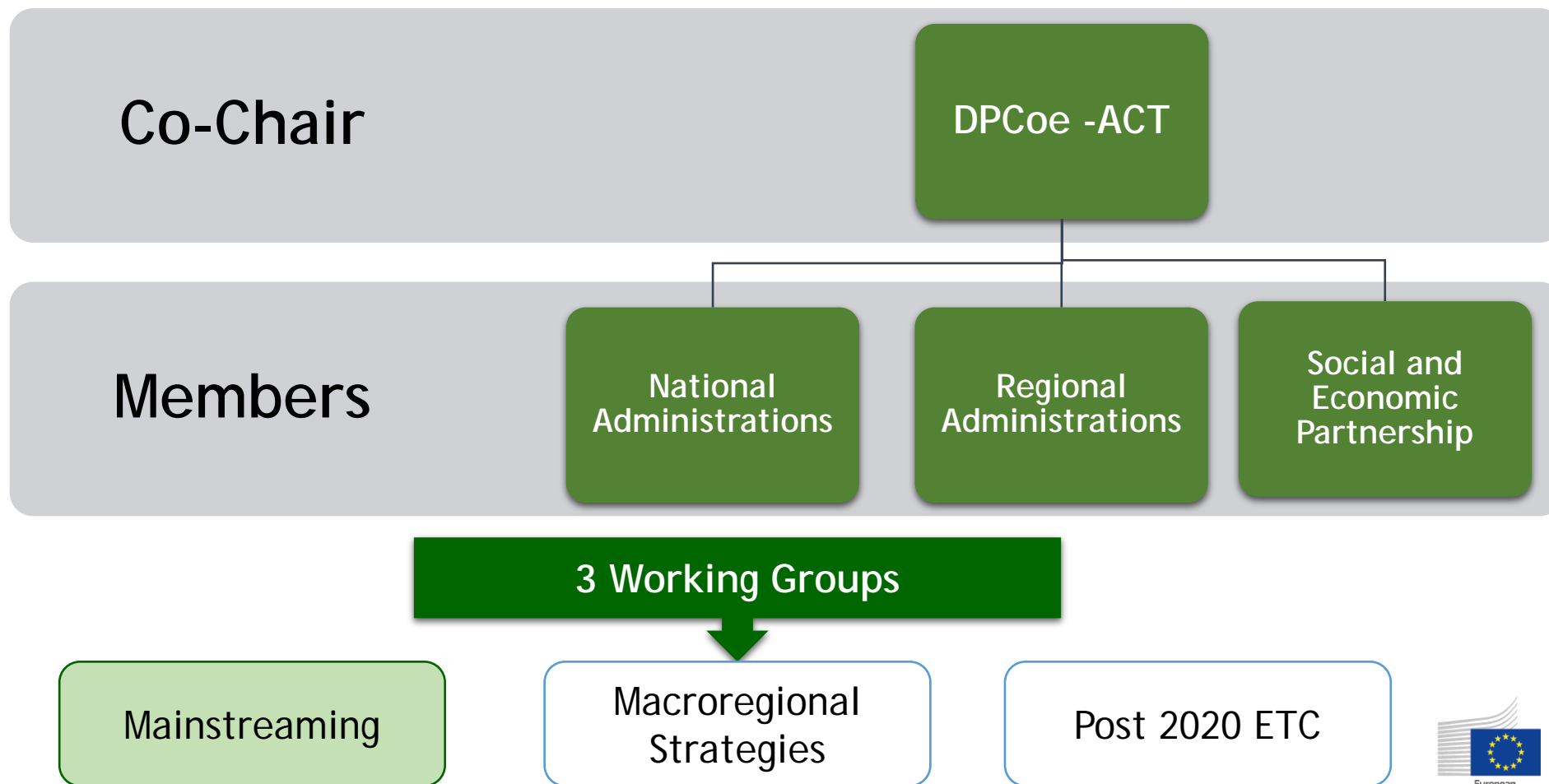
#EURegionsWeek

Enhancing Cooperation in EU Regions: the role of the National Authority for the embedding of cooperation results into IGJ

Germana DI FALCO, Expert, Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale, Italy.

AGENCY FOR TERRITORIAL COHESION: ACTIVITIES FOR MAINSTREAMING

Coordination Activities
- ETC Strategic Coordination Group according to Partnership Agreement

Analisys and Reporting
- Annual Report on italian participation to ETC, ENI, IPA Programs
- ETC database «SMART CTE»

Activities within ETC Programs
- Territorial Focus Groups of NCP MED on Mainstreaming
- WP Mainstreaming in PANORAMED Project (Lead by PACA)
- EUSAIR Facility Point in ADRION (Lead by Slovenia)

Capitalization
- Analisys of ETC Programs capitalizazion activities and definition of a Capitalization national Plan

European Committee of the Regions

European Commission

MAINSTREAMING ANALYSIS IN THE ANNUAL ETC REPORT

- 45% of ETC approved projects with Italian partners show **significative complementarities with mainstream Programs** (of which 78% with ERDF Programs)

- Taking into account thematic coherence there is a **great potential of synergies** also with ESF, EAFRD, EMFF

- Relevant **synergies among ETC projects and S3**

- Observed **integration with Inner Areas Strategies and Sustainable Urban Development Strategies**

- Updates on 96.3.d Article

- **Underestimated added value** of the potential use of Art. 96.3.d

- **Less involved regions** respect 2007-2013

- **Different approach**: from general reference to specific indication to Art. 96.3.d for each specific objective

- Only **one Region** has allocated a dedicated budget

- Only **ERDF Programs**

- For **ESF Programs**, misunderstanding on the difference with Art. 10 ESF Regulation

- Even if interested, MA doesn't consider this activity a **priority**

- Some **methodological difficulties** in its application

- **Linguistic competence** of the staff may be an obstacle

European Committee of the Regions

European Commission

WHO NOT?

▪ ETC projects are concentrated in less than the half of the regions. «Big spenders» are not among the **Regions** in which ROPs include art. 96.3.d (and let's consider that the first 10 big spenders both for number of projects and budget are Regions themselves): policy learning platforms in IR-E or strategic projects or governance projects are the platforms where mainstreaming has to be declined more proactively in terms of «coordination between ETC and IGJ» and « cooperation between ETC and IGJ»

● The data show a «professionalization» of ETC: «usual suspects» are **recurring beneficiaries** (even in the frameworks of different programmes). They are not so effective or empowered or interested in playing a role for <u>«bottom-up» pushing for mainstreaming</u>.

European Committee
of the Regions

European
Commission

WHO NOT?

- Only ERDF ROPs are considered for mainstreaming (no **National Operational Programme**, no **ESF ROP**, no **EARDF**): not only S3 (63 projects and 120 italian partners) but also AKIS, sustainable urban development strategies (301 projects involve cities as beneficiaries), rural development and strategies for internal areas/smart villages (408 participations) or fishery and coastal development (254 participations) find significative complementarities/overlappings with ETC but also FLAGs/LAGs are often involved in ETC and no significative rebound can be seen on mainstream programmes

- **Citizens and stakeholders**: ECCP is still weakly applied but in the very initial stages of the programming (Open Cohesion and civic monitoring helped a lot mainstream programmes); outreach is almost never mentioned but by ESPON and this defines the dissemination and capitalization strategies; stakeholders platforms often overlap and it is still difficult to coordinate ETC programmes in this direction; project clustering has seldom a cross-programme direction (and almost never cross-programme projects clusters refer to extra-ETC programmes)

- **ETC Programmes**: when we map the approach to mainstreaming in Italy, we have the _«informants»_ (maybe because of the programme scale), the _«untapped potential»_ (even when the MA is the same, complementarity is still far to be reached and the ETC impact is low), the _«methodological promoters»_ (joint task forces are in place but the switch from coordination to cooperation is still on construction), the _«active integrators»_
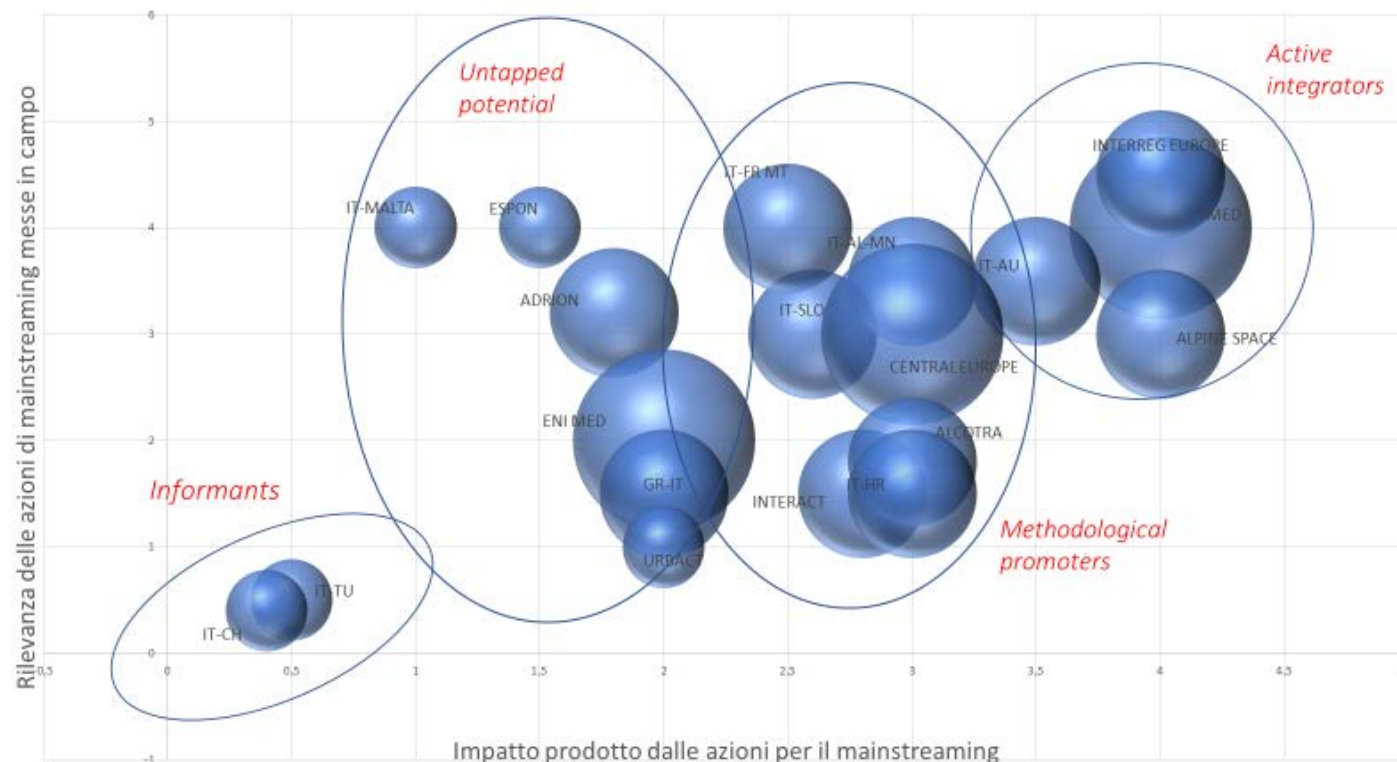
WHAT NOT?

▪ **Impact evaluation**: a) not from all the ETC programme; b) evaluations at regional scale (PUV/ Unitary Evaluation Plans that consider ETC only in VdA, Emilia Romagna, Trento and Friuli Venezia Giulia)

• **From «lighthouse projects» to «lighthouse outputs»**: no outputs repository/smart library

• **Not one spot Focus**: the experience of MED and the DPCoe, ACT, Interact supported activity that organized roadshows and joint working groups in which the request for results from ETC was made explicit by the MAs and by the regional policy makers

WHY NOT?

- On-field interviews to EARDF, ESF and EARDF from Calabria, Lombardia, Campania and Marche helped us to map what works and why mainstreaming doesn't happen so easily

  - Low budget of ETC programmes and low cost/effectiveness rate

  - Skills (staff is not integrated) and evaluation of performance

  - On-time internal information flow

  - Working labs or joint working groups are extremely time-consuming. Facilitation for dialogue is not adequate

  - ETC develops innovative approaches but no practical Transfer of Innovation to mainstream never tested (i.e. «Seal of Excellence» can be an option)

  - Limited cooperation in engaging beneficiaries and stakeholders to create synergies

  - Technical training for procurement, selection procedures, capacity building, indicators

  - Thematic focus: i.e. transports and mobility, value chain

  - Win-win strategy: i.e. ETC projects and networks can be used as proof of the «enabling conditions» for 2021-2027 OPs

WHEN NOT?

- ▪ **Programming**: in 21 Regions there are ETC/Mainstream joint working groups but open the programming documents for transnational activities needs support both in terms of knowledge and of envisioning of types of priorities, implementation and project selection methods that allow for combinations and synergies in the course of the IGJ programmes

- • **Implementation**: no mechanism like the «Horizon 2020 watch» is applied to assure sincronicity in calls and alignment in the selection criteria; permanent open submission of applications to react timely to ETC or other call/opportunity for combined funding/synergies; get familiar with the type of ETC eligible costs and project formats; unit costs and simplified cost options to overcome differences in monitoring and reporting; foresee full cost models; improve capacities of NCPs to provide support services; install a tracking system of synergies with mainstream programmes at ETC programme level/national level

- • **Rythm**: interlink websites and informations, call and selection processes duration (11-12 months)

FROM MAINSTREAMING TO EMBEDDING

The embedding of cooperation actions within IGJ Programs should be sustained through:

- **NCPs**: NCPs should inform Mas about projects, participants and results in their territory in a timely manner (and this can also reflects in a system – smart CTE/keep – able to target relevant information to Mas);

- **Make it visible**: create scenarios sketching out possibilities for synergies to facilitate the understanding or ETC potential and mechanism for national and regional authorities and the possible joint implementation strategy; "flagship results" for Ops; table of correspondence between TOs/Investment Priorities 2014-2020 and Pos/SOs 2021-2027

- **Multi-sided approach**: use as a leverage a common platform also with other programmes including integrated planning and synergies with ESIF funds (H2020 JPJ and Horizon Europe Synergies and COFUND; LIFE IP; Erasmus KAs; Next Generation EU; Invest EU; REACT EU)

Remove ice from power lines

- **Prevent ice from forming** Specific guidelines for embedding (also in Partnership Agreements); Definition of harmonized templates for selection procedures and application forms; Dealing with dysfunctional behavior by giving constructive feedbacks (that is to say: setting the facilitation context)
- **Shake lines** Promotion of cooperation actions better programming within national or regional Programs; Steering committee among MA and internal structures involved in ETC activities;
- **Warm lines** Helping Partner search activities and networking at EU level; Training for involved staff; Better coordination among territorial strategies, territorial development tools and cooperation actions; do not underestimate the full cycle of group dynamics (forming, storming, norming, performing)

Thank you for your attention

Germana Di Falco

Expert

AGENCY FOR TERRITORIAL COHESION
Area Progetti e Strumenti
Ufficio VI Programmi Operativi cooperazione territoriale cofinanziati,
attività internazionale, cooperazione bilaterale
Via Sicilia 162/c - 00187 ROMA

e-mail: germana.difalco.esp@agenziacoesione.gov.it