

IP Valencia Update - Issue No. 5 Cooperation in Regional Policy: A dynamic Mechanism

What is art. 37.6.b Reg 1083/2006?

The aim of this article is to provide regions with cooperation tools to be inserted in Objectives 1 and 2 programmes. Therefore, the actions for cooperation implemented have to comply fully with the regional strategy laid out in the Regional Operational Programme (ROP). Article 37.6.b is complementary and different to European Territorial Cooperation (ETC); activities financed under art. 37.6.b may be related to typical Objectives 1 and 2 actions, such as infrastructure, and only 2 partners are needed, as a minimum.

No specific guidelines on this article have been issued so far; however, Regulations 1083/2006 and 1080/2006 provide for the basic framework and allow regions to start cooperation actions.



Summary of Seminar on Cooperation in Regional Policy, 14-15 October 2009

Almost 60 representatives from different EU countries (Member States, MAs, other cooperation programmes, regional programmes' partners, JTS and regional and local authorities) as well as the European Commission participated in the seminar on cooperation in regional policy held in Naples (IT) on 14 and 15 October 2009.

The event was organised in collaboration with other INTERACT Points and the INTERACT Secretariat and provided a platform of exchange on ideas, information and experiences among the stakeholders interested in, or already implementing, article 37.6.b. The participants were given the opportunity to present their "state-of-play" and debate on the various technical consequences of cooperation under article 37.6.b.

Italian regions were particularly eager to learn more as half of them created a budget line for cooperation in their ROPs referring to this article. Some concrete examples of art. 37.6.b cooperation were presented, like Limousin Region's and some examples in Sweden.

In addition, important input was provided on INTERREG IVC and Regions for Economic Change.

As a result of discussions, it was made clear that regions may use article 37.6.b in parallel to ETC even if they did not mention it in their ROPs, as long as the cooperation activities are consistent with the regional strategy. The reason behind it is that since the article is mentioned in the Regulation, it is automatically open to any region.

Article 37.6.b is currently inserted and mentioned in the OPs of at least 42 programmes (in 12 Member States), but every region has foreseen different ways of implementing it.

The Baltic Sea and Danube Strategies were also mentioned as a likely new context where the flexible cooperation tools may be implemented. Besides, the possibilities of creating an EGTC by means of art. 37.6.b were also tackled.

It was agreed that the added value of the article is manifold:

- It allows bilateral cooperation between regions that do not share common borders, but share objectives
- It allows the development of concrete activities that do not limit themselves to networking and exchange of best practices
- It may be a flexible cooperation tool even if various topics are to be addressed

