



Technical Support Instrument  
2024 flagship projects

# Overcoming barriers to regional development

## Objectives

The overarching aim is to contribute directly to the objectives of the [EU Cohesion Policy](#) to strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union.

In particular, the flagship will support the efforts of the regional authorities, including island territories and EU outermost regions, to define and implement appropriate processes and methodologies to address the development challenges in an integrated

manner and by taking into account good practices and lessons learned from other regions. In addition, the flagship also aims to incentivise peer learning and promote intra Member State and cross-border regional cooperation and will work in complementarity to existing Commission initiatives on [Harnessing Talent in Europe's Regions](#), [New European Innovation Agenda](#), [Just Transition Platform](#), [Smart Specialisation Platform](#) and others.

## Support measures

EU Member States and regions (including on behalf of local authorities) may choose technical support from the following non-exhaustive list of measures, selecting one or more reform areas, which can be tailored to the region's needs:

### REFORM AREA: Improving the quality of governance and public services

#### Work package 1: Diagnosis and identifications of factors holding back a region

- Identify challenges and blockages related to regional public governance and quality of public services, incl. deficient policy design and implementation, corruption, low attractiveness of public service employment, lack of control systems, as well as insufficient communication and coordination between various administration levels.
- Identify gaps of capacity, knowledge, and skills for the effective design, implementation, monitoring of growth enhancing reforms.

#### Work package 2: Strategy and action plan development

- Provide recommendations to improve the management of national and EU funds at national and regional level.

- Support the fight against corruption.
- Support the deployment of e-public services.
- Improve the service provision and better access to healthcare, social security, housing, etc.

#### Work package 3: Peer-learning, capacity building and stakeholder engagement

- Exchange knowledge and good practices between regions facing similar challenges to improve the quality of governance and public services.
- Create regional networks to foster long term cooperation in the areas holding back regions.
- Design governance mechanism and stakeholder engagement strategies, along the requirements of Cohesion Funds. Build communication capacity to engage with regional stakeholders and develop ownership of reforms.

## Support measures

### REFORM AREA: Strengthening productivity, innovation, and green transition

#### Work package 1: Diagnosis and identifications of factors holding back a region

- Identify local strengths and weaknesses to foster growth and productivity improvements.
- Analyse existing barriers and enablers to innovation and entrepreneurship, including the green and digital transition.
- Identify opportunities for coordination of region's R&I policies and assist in prioritisation of interregional innovation projects linked to key EU priorities.

#### Work package 2: Strategy and action plan development

- Provide recommendations to regions to overcome barriers to innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen and connect local ecosystems for innovation and promote regional networks between science and businesses.
- Support the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process and the implementation of R&I strategies.
- Support regional administrations in building climate-neutral economies and making use of the available national and EU funding opportunities (e.g., Cohesion Funds, Just Transition Mechanism, Climate Social Fund, RRF).
- Foster regional attractiveness to investors.
- Support the development of joint innovation plans to constitute connected Regional Innovation Valleys.

#### Work package 3: Peer-learning, capacity building and stakeholder engagement

- Exchange knowledge and good practices between regions of a Member State that face similar challenges to stimulate productivity, innovation and growth.
- Encourage and support participation in regional and national networks to foster long term cooperation in the areas holding back regions.
- Design governance mechanism and strategy for stakeholder engagement along the requirements of Cohesion Funds.
- Build communication capacity to engage with regional stakeholders and develop ownership of reforms.

- Develop regional and local capacities to implement projects with EU funding in the areas of productivity, innovation and green transition.

### REFORM AREA: Harnessing talent and employment opportunities

#### Work package 1: Diagnosis and identifications of factors holding back a region

- Assess entrenched regional gaps in foundational skills, accessibility and quality of the education provided by tertiary and vocational education and training institutions.
- Identify educational gaps and employment opportunities related to the digital and green transition.

#### Work package 2: Strategy and action plan development

- Support the upskilling and reskilling of the regional workforce for the digital and green transition (e.g. support to vocational training).
- Support regional education systems (e.g. encouraging inclusiveness and quality of education systems, leveraging digital solutions to close the digital skills gaps, ensuring the efficient use of tertiary and vocational education and training institutions and boosting professionalisation of teachers).
- Develop recommendations to harness talent and overcome demographic challenges.

#### Work package 3: Peer-learning, capacity building and stakeholder engagement

- Exchange knowledge and good practices between regions facing similar challenges to improve harnessing talent and development of employment opportunities.
- Create regional networks to foster long term cooperation in the areas holding back regions.
- Design governance mechanism and draft strategy for stakeholder engagement.
- Build communication capacity to engage with regional stakeholders and develop ownership of reforms.



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