

# **The contribution of European Programs in Regional Development. The case of European Territorial Cooperation - INTERREG V-A: Greece-Cyprus**

*Tasou Maria-Eirini<sup>1</sup>, Vassiliki Delitheou<sup>2</sup>*

## **Introduction**

Experience across the various regions within Europe suggests a rapidly changing context for undertaking regional development and regional planning activities (Neil Adams, Neil Harris, Jeremy Alden). Concerning the contribution of European Union, an investment policy has been created in order to support the Regional Development. In particular, Regional Policy targets all regions and cities in the European Union in order to support job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development as well as citizens' quality of life improvement. In order to reach these goals and address the diverse development needs in all EU regions, € 351.8 billion – almost a third of the total EU budget – has been set aside for Cohesion Policy for the 2014-2020 programming period.

Regional Policy is delivered through two main funds: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) AND THE Cohesion Fund (CF). In tandem the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) AND THE European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), they make up the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds.

The European institutions' interest in transnational cooperation began in the early 1990s with the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) studies Europe 2000 (CEC, 1991) and Europe 200+ (CEC, 1994). Increasing territorial cooperation on spatial development across national and regional borders has also prompted a greater demand for comparable spatial information. Initiatives such as the Urban Audit and the 'European Spatial Planning Observation Network' (ESPON) have been set up in response.

The EU's primary instrument to support cooperation across national borders, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), is INTERREG. The INTERREG Initiative was launched in 1990 with a budget of one billion Euros in order to overcome the disadvantages presented by administrative boundaries of adjacent regions in the emerging Single Market.

In particular, concerning the Cooperation Program Interreg V-A "Greece –Cyprus 2014-2020", the Managing Authority of the European Territorial Cooperation Programs – based in Thessaloniki – manages and monitors it. The Program aims to address common cross-border and transnational challenges, supports the synergy through the partnership and establishes a strong partnership with a view to balanced economic, social and spatial development at European level.

---

<sup>1</sup> Post-Graduate Student at Athens University of Economics and Business, Department of Statistics, Quantitative Methods and Decision Making. Email: mariarena\_tasou@hotmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. Department of Economic and Regional Development. Email : v.delitheou@panteion.gr

Besides the fact that in some cases there are delays which decelerate the procedures, many projects have been set up, in the framework of the program, which contribute to reach its goals, concerning the territorial cooperation.

**Key words:** partnership agreement 2014-2020, territorial cooperation programs, Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus

**JEL Codes:** G21

## **1. European Programs**

### **1.1. The contribution of European Programs**

As far as the country of Greece concerning, since 2009, it faces a period of immense financial recession. Despite the fact that this situation seems to change progressively, the Local and Regional Development have been subjected to negative changes. The co-financed Programs of European Union contribute to the improvement of the present situation of Greece, as they apply a scheduled policy which aims to mitigate its problems and they support the country's development.

Community resources are the major funding source of Greece's development policy. The five most essential funds that co-finance that policy, are the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - which supports the Regional and Urban Development, the European Social Fund (ESF) - which reinforces the social inclusion and the effective governance, and the European Cohesion Fund (ECF) - which contributes to the financial convergence of the any less developed Regions. Furthermore, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) support particular sectors of financial activity (the agricultural one and fishery, accordingly).

The income of the country results mainly from taxes enforcement and lending and – any less - from the entrepreneurship. The taxation, as mean of income collection is fulfilled either directly or indirectly. The public lending offers income to the State, which if it is leveraged, it will lead to Financial and Regional Development. The public sector has the possibility to proceed either to internal or external lending.

As far as the Regional incomes concerning, they contribute to co-financed programs, and they are secured from the Central Independent Funds and they are shared both through the Regular Budget and the Consignment Deposits and Loans Fund (CDLF).

The income of municipalities, that co-finance the programs, comes from grants of national budget, incomes from the utilization of its movables and real estate assets, regional potential levies and taxes, license fees and rights (Petraikos G. and Psycharis G., 2016). The municipalities have the opportunity to increase their incomes by unexpected actions too.

Co-financed programs can be supported by private sector too. The benefits of the private's sector contribution, is the restriction of the program's cost, the meetings of the deadlines as well as the usage of cutting edge technology and know-how which contribute to the cost

reduction. It is possible though some problems to be emerged, such as bureaucracy, obstacles from local factors and deficiency of the suitable institutional framework. Besides that, the exchanges' costs, lending and opportunity costs will be higher than the corresponding ones of the public's sector.

#### Programming Periods of European Co-financed Programs

Community Support Frameworks (CSF), as non-refunding boost, was result of the reforming Structural Funds. They aimed at the reinforcement of financial and social coherence in the Community. The first CSF, fulfilled between 1989-1993 and offered approximately 15,5 billion ECU (Papadaskalopoulos A. & Christofakis M., 2016). The main priority pillars of this program were six (6) and it could be fulfilled through (12) Sectoral and (13) Regional Operational Programs. The sources though did not be utilized as they should have, as they were consumed to small works of the central institutions in Regions, Municipalities and Communities. As a result, those resources did not contribute to Regional Development, as a consequence of both the lack of a suitable institutional framework which did not exist and due to the deficiency of decentralized structures of resources management.

The second CSF, in comparison with the first one, was extended by one year as well as the sponsored resources had been increased. The total amount ascends to 29,72 billion ECU, and 3.061 billion ECU come from the European Coherence Fund (Papadaskalopoulos A. & Christofakis M., 2016). The interference pillars, were five (5). The results though, proved that the resources were offered to the development of big works, were shifted to the fulfillment of the smaller works, in regional range. Though, the issue of the promotion of small infrastructural works, kept existing, however less intensely than the commensurable phenomenon of the previous CSF (Petrakos G. & Psycharis G., 2016).

At the Programming Period of the third CSF (2000-2006) the total amount of funds, without considering the funds from the Community Initiatives, was higher than 50 billion € (Structural Funds, Coherence Funds and National Participation approximately 39,2 billion €, individual funding approximately 11,5 billion €) (Papadaskalopoulos A. & Christofakis M., 2016). It was including 7 priority pillars among 24 Operational Programs. The priority pillars 1-6 had to do with the development of Sectoral Policies, while the seventh one was consisted of 13 integrated Regional Operational Programs.

The National Strategic Reference Framework (2007-2013), was funded with up to 45 billion €, for the execution of Regional Developmental policy and its implementation was fulfilled throughout ten (10) priority hubs. The ninth (9th) one is focused on the Regional Development and is achieved through thirteen (13) Operational Programs (8 Sectoral ones and 5 Regional Operational Programs).

The Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 constitutes the main strategic plan for growth in Greece with the contribution of significant resources originating from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) of the European Union. The PA, through its implementation, seeks to tackle the structural weaknesses in Greece that contributed to the economic crisis, as well as other economic and social problems caused by it. Moreover, the PA 2014-2020 is called upon to help attain the

national targets within the Europe 2020 Strategy. It is comprised of five financial priorities, which reflect on twenty (20) Programs in total (7 Sectoral and 13 Regional ones).

## 1.2 Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 Greece

The Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 (PA 2014 - 2020) constitutes the main strategic plan for growth in Greece with the contribution of significant resources originating from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) of the European Union. The PA 2014-2016 is managed by the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism. Through its implementation, the PA 2014-2020 seeks to tackle the structural weaknesses in Greece that contributed to the economic crisis, as well as other economic and social problems caused by it. Moreover, the PA 2014-2020 is called upon to help attain the national targets within the Europe 2020 Strategy. PA 2014 -2020 financing priorities are:

- Enhancing business competitiveness and extroversion, shifting to qualitative entrepreneurship spearheaded by innovation and higher domestic added value: In particular, this priority is categorized in the transition to high added value activities, in creation of a business friendly environment to attract investments and in capitalising on research and innovation to strengthen the competitiveness of new and existing businesses.
- Development and utilisation of human resource abilities – active social inclusion. This hub, is focused on education and life-long learning, development of human resources and access to employment focusing on the creation of jobs, especially for young people and on promotion of social inclusion and combating poverty.
- Protection of the environment – transition to a more environmentally friendly economy, which approaches the issue of protection of the environment, fostering climate change adaptation and risk prevention and shift to a low carbon economy.
- Development – modernisation – completion of infrastructures for economic and social growth priority, stipulates on the transport networks focusing on the completion of the Trans-European Transport Networks, with vertical axes and multi-modal transport, on energy networks as well as on broadband networks
- Improvement of the institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration and local government
- At the national level, eight sectors have been selected to which priority will be given. They are expected to play a greater role in economic growth. These sectors are: agri-food, health – medicines, ICT, energy, environment and sustainable development, transport, materials – construction and tourism, culture, creative industries.

The Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 might be relevant for MSP-related projects and initiatives, depending on the specific calls that will be activated. This could be for example the case of calls related to the financing priority on protection of the environment and transition to a more environmentally friendly economy.

### 1.2.1. Sectoral Operational Programs

#### Operational Program "Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation" (EPAnEK)

This program finances the actions and projects that are mainly supported by the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund), as well as the ESF (European Social Fund), in order to ensure that, in tandem with investments, the needs for training human resources and administrative reform are met. The strategic objective of EPAnEK is to enhance the competitiveness and extroversion of businesses, with a shift towards high calibre entrepreneurship spearheaded by innovation and higher domestic added value. This program signals a great shift in the new development paradigm that showcases the key role of productive, competitive and extrovert sectors, such as tourism, agri-food, as well as processing and high added value services, so as to increase the scale/size of production units, accelerate the introduction of new products/services that create a competitive edge to Greece and the individual regions and incorporate new knowledge, producing high quality products that are competitive on a global scale.

#### "Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development Operational Program" (YMEPERAA)

This program encompasses more than one sector and fund (ERDF and CF) and through these Funds mainly finances core transport and environment infrastructures. A part of the budget pertains to the environment and specifically the Cohesion Fund and is assigned to 13 ROPs, in order to be managed by the Regions for the implementation of mainly liquid waste management projects. The objectives of the Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020 OP with respect to transport consist of promoting the completion of the infrastructure of the core TEN-T (road, rail, ports, airports), promoting combined transport and modernization of the transport system, enhanced road safety, as well as the development of sustainable and ecological urban transport (fixed trajectory urban transport) to enhance sustainable urban mobility. With respect to the environment, it aims to protect and develop the environment, as a means to support Greece's transition to a more environmentally friendly economy whilst at the same time fostering competitive edges across the economy in order to make it easier to attract investments and to provide opportunities in business activities in the sector of the environment.

#### "Human Resources Development – Education and Life Long Learning Operational Program"

This program spans many sectors and is financed by a single fund (ESF). It is the main support tool for Greece and, in synergy and complementarity with the other OPs, will contribute to economic recovery, as it includes comprehensive policies to support the creation of sustainable jobs, promote active inclusion in the labor market, including the inclusion of vulnerable social groups, improve the efficacy of the Greek educational system, improve the matching of education, training and life-long learning with the labor market, with the main aim of limiting and/or eliminating the social consequences of the crisis and/or minimizing the cost of high unemployment.

#### "Reform of the Public Sector Operational Program"

The present Sectoral program includes actions aiming at the introduction of reforms through new technologies and IT in the Public Sector. This is a multi-sectoral and multi-fund (ERDF and ESF) program. Public administration efficacy is Greece's key priority, given that it affects all operating, production and development levels across the board, and comprises, at the same time, a main precondition for the effective implementation of reforms in all sectors. The OP contributes to the national effort so that in the next few years, the Greek Public Administration will be cohesive, well-coordinated, flexible, outward looking and results oriented, restoring the relationship of trust between the state and citizens and businesses, providing citizen-centric and continuously upgraded services, thus consisting one of the main pillars for the recovery of Greece.

#### “Technical Assistance Operational Program”

The program draws on the financing of many funds (ERDF, ESF and CF) and aims at supporting the operation and implementation of all the OPs that are financed by the Structural Funds.

#### “Rural Development Program” (RDP) on a national level

The program spans many sectors and draws financing from one fund (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development- EAFRD). The RDP aims at achieving integrated development and sustainable competitiveness of the agricultural sector through a transition to a strong, sustainable agri-food system and enhancement of the added value of rural areas. Approximately 30% of this program is assigned to the Regions for management.

#### “Fisheries and Maritime Operational Program”

This program is under a single fund (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund - EMFF). The OP's main objectives are to enhance the competitiveness of the aquaculture and processing sectors, the viability of the sea fisheries sector and the sustainable development of traditionally fisheries-dependent areas. The program also addresses the need for protection and rehabilitation of the marine environment and its living resources, the control of fisheries activities, the collection of fisheries data and the improvement of knowledge on the state of the marine environment.

### 1.2.2. Regional Operational Programs

The Partnership Agreement 2014-2020, along with the sectoral programs, includes also 13 multi-sectoral and multi-funded Regional Operational Programs (ROP). Each and every one of the Greek regions is the subject of a Regional Program that includes projects and regional scale actions, leverages local strengths and is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

Their common ground is the aim to strengthen the capacity of regional and local authorities to implement a full range of actions that aim to serve the main priorities of the PA. Moreover, the regions will be assigned the management of important resources of the

Cohesion Fund for the Environment and especially funds that will be directed to meeting the country's as well as the Regions' obligations relating to waste water. The 13 Regions will also be assigned the management of approximately 30% of the funds from the Rural Development Program.

In particular, the thirteen Regional Operational Programs concern the regions of Macedonia (Eastern, Central and Western), Epirus, Thessaly, Ionian Islands, Western Greece, Sterea Ellada, Attica, Peloponnese, Northern Aegean, Southern Aegean and Crete.

### 1.2.3. Territorial Cooperating Programs

European Territorial Cooperation Programs (ETC) are a key tool for strengthening the territorial cooperation both in the European context and with third countries and constitute one of the main options for the programming period 2014-2020. The European territorial cooperation at the level of the European Union member states is implemented through cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation programs. These programs are either bilateral or multilateral.

Since its inception Interreg (bilateral program) has been a Community Initiative Program (CIP). Since 1990 four (4) generations of programs, lasting from four to seven years, have been initiated and a fifth phase which began in 2014 will be completed in 2020. The initiative of a community support program, dates back to mid-1980s. Luxemburg, Belgium and France were the first countries who applied this kind of programs. The Interreg Program, sought to involve local and regional stakeholders in eliminating barriers to the free movement of goods, people, capital and services by allowing them to develop cross-border projects.

The introduction of reciprocal arrangements through cross-border projects could not – however – be applied across the border to all frontiers, particularly those that formed external borders of EU-12. The eligible areas were essentially those NUTS3<sup>3</sup> areas that separated by a land or maritime border.

Project selection depends on a number of principles namely the involvement of at least two stakeholders situated on either side of a frontier in the areas eligible for the program, co-financing by different partners (the EU provides up to 85% of the total for the period 2014-2020), independent management (a managing authority handles all the interaction with the Commission) and management control exercised by the Member States in question, under the Commission's supervision.

---

<sup>3</sup> Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS), is a harmonized hierarchical classification of European Territory at six levels (NUTS0-NUTS6). Level0 corresponds to the territories of the Member States and EFTA Member States associated with classification. The regional level is divided into 3 parts: NUTS1 corresponds to the most extensive regional level, NUTS3 is an intermediate level. For several countries, particularly the smaller ones, certain levels do not exist.

Each program, which is negotiated by the partners on either side of the border and the Commission, includes a strategy that provides overall guidance for the projects. This procedure thus, enables local and regional stakeholders to deal directly with the Commission, a fact that enhances their independence.

In 2015, ETC cross-border programs cover all the border areas of the 28 Member States, the members of European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Member States within boundaries that in some cases have been extended to the point that some countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden, Slovakia) are either entirely or almost entirely covered by eligible areas. Each generation of Interreg programs, has taken account of successive enlargements of EU by including on each occasion an even-greater number of eligible areas, which are called "cross-border" regions (since 2007).

Several regions figuring in the first two phases of Interreg have seen their areas enlarged, particularly in Interreg IV and V. Furthermore, maritime regions, such as Denmark, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Greece and Sweden, are included as eligible areas as well. This demonstrates that a maritime border is no longer regarded as a discontinuity, but rather as an interface. At the end of each programming period a stocktake of activities is performed, the results of which are then taken into account in redefining programs for the following phase.

Interreg V has started for 2014-2020 period, as part of the EU's Europe 2020 strategy. It aims to promote both smart and sustainable growth and a diverse and inclusive society. Eleven (11) thematic priorities linking directly to Europe 2020 have been identified and are developed in all Interreg V programs, depending on their territorial priorities. Interreg V currently takes the form of over 100 Programs, 60 of which are in a strand A, 15 in strand B, 12 under IPA CBC and 16 under ENPI CBC, to which one should add strand C, with Interreg Europe and the three networking programs already presented in Interreg IV (URBACT, INTERACT, ESPON).

Interreg programs have become an essential component of territorial cooperation with the EU and on its external borders. Fund management and project implementation are often the responsibility of local and regional stakeholders, but EU support is not provided unless the project complies with a certain number of rules and principles. Eligible territories are always cross-border areas (in the sense that they bring together regions located in adjoining countries) but their spatial organization that integration takes are often appreciably different. Strand A helps to tie cross-border regions together by supporting local and regional stakeholders in a framework of proximity. Strand B aims to promote cohesion around common spatial planning issues over large areas covering several countries, encourages the establishment of governance structures in order to draw up strategies and action plans. Strand C is intended as a cooperation framework for fostering interaction between local and regional stakeholders throughout the EU networking basis.



## **2. Interreg V-A Greece –Cyprus**

### **2.1. Objectives of the program**

The cooperation program Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus aims to increase the competitiveness of the eligible area by supporting entrepreneurship and the use of information and communication technologies. The foreseen interventions will improve the capacity of SMEs to exploit opportunities outside the local market with emphasis on sectors that emerge from the RIS3 process. This will take place in a sustainable manner by mitigating or reversing the negative effects of climate change through promoting a low emission economy. The program aims to integrate all issues relating to the environment, either in terms of protection against risks or in terms of promotion of the natural and cultural heritage. Concerning the financing of the program, the total budget states at 64.560.486,00 €, of which 54.876.411,00 € comes from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – 85% - and the rest 8.472.545,65 € -15%- from National sources.

The program focuses on enhancing competitiveness and entrepreneurship in the eligible area, efficient use of energy and sustainable support as well as on conversation and protection of the environment and risk prevention.

The regions that are eligible, are: Northern and Southern Aegean, Crete and Cyprus. The anticipated results are the increase of the use of Information and Communication Technologies by business and the public sector, the reduction of air pollutants in urban areas in the eligible area, the enhancement of the accessibility in the border region, simultaneously with the improvement of transport safety, the improvement of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, the production of Joint Tourism development strategies and planning of joint alternative tourism products or/ and destinations, as well as the improvement of the efficiency of water sources and the promotion of integrated waste management.

The institutions that can apply are the current program, are the national, regional or local public authorities, bodies governed by public law, non- governmental organizations of private law, universities and research institutes, civil society organizations and municipalities.

### **2.2. Methodology and Integration Criteria**

The proposals that are submitted to the framework of the territorial cooperation Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus 2014-2020, are evaluated by the method of benchmarking.

In particular, the selection procedure of operations is divided in three (3) phases:

Phase 1: Eligibility control concerning the proposal

Phase 2: Evaluation of the proposal, according to individual and group criteria

Phase 3: Eligibility control of the proprietor proposals which suggested to the Monitoring Committee for approval

The evaluation is carried out from the executive member of the Joint Secretariat of the territorial cooperation program Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus 2014-2020 or/and external assessors - in cases that is necessary- for whom is ensured that they do not have conflicting interests, and they are provided themselves the necessary experience and know-how for the procedure of the evaluation. The Joint Secretariat has the right to ask for the submission of any clarifications at any phase of the evaluation procedure. Concerning the clarifications, the proprietor is informed either electronically or written for the supplement documents, and has to send them within ten (10) calendar days, in other case the proposal is rejected.

As far as the first phase concerning, it includes the completeness of the submitted pack, the eligibility of the proposal and the compliance of horizontal policies.

The second phase is composed by three (3) groups:

- Content's criteria: This group includes the adhesion and feasibility of the proposal, the results quality, innovation and cross-border cooperation
- Fulfillment criteria: partnership quality, quality of methodological approach concerning the proposal's content, maturity, budget and financing
- Special criteria: Special criteria concern the compliance of horizontal policies.

The criteria of the groups above are marked by multiple values. The special criteria in particular, are divided in exclusion criteria and marked criteria.

At the third phase, the Joint Secretariat, informs the Principal Beneficiary for the Decision of the Control Committee and requests the submission of the documents. The former organization also, request to the evaluation of the documents, according to the program regulations and introduces in Control Committee the final board, in order for the proposal to be funded.

The maximum total score that can be achieved is 100 points and the evaluation procedure is applied consecutively for every single category, according to the row that referred above. In order for any proposal to be financed, it is necessary to gather equal or greater grade than this one which is defined for the proposal funding (70 points).

### 2.3 Detecting problems on program implementation

Concerning the main issues that emerge through the program implementation, it is important to be noticed that they do not constitute a serious trammel for the program fulfillment.

The pending verification procedure from the Management and Control System is a factor which setbacks the progress of the "Greece-Cyprus" 2014-2020 program. The present

System, submitted formally to the Committee of Fiscal Control, as program's Audit Authority, in May 2017. Whereupon, the Managing Authority's comments and recommendations, The Audit Authority initially aimed to a discussion with Managing Authority, in order to ensure the most optimum common comprehension of the individual issues. Afterwards, the Managing Authority offered the ground for negotiations with the responsible authorities of both cooperative countries in order to achieve an updated description of the Management and Control System, which would be submitted at the Audit Authority in 2018. At the present time, Managing Authority is cooperating intensely with the Audit Authority, in order to form an opinion concerning the validation of the Management and Control System, for the programming period 2014-2020. Moreover a Risk Management plan, has been formed, whilst the Managing Authority which is provided with ISO since 2013, applies the fundamentals of quality assurance which are concerned in ISO 9001:2015.

The incomplete availability of the Integrated Information System, which first tried by the Managing Authority as well as other responsible authorities, is expected to be fully integrated during the first term of 2018. The Integrated Information System, will be combined with the Information System of Community Guidelines Management, for the institutions which situated in Greece (initially). The former system, includes necessary procedures and data, concerning the management, the control and the fulfillment of the actions which boost and support entrepreneurship. The Cooperation Program "Interreg V-A, Greece-Cyprus 2014-2020" is deprived of actions, focused on Community Guidelines. In any case though, all the actions related with that issue are monitored. In that framework, if any issue related to Community Guidelines emerged during the proposal's evaluation the beneficiary has to submit an official declaration to the Managing Authority, declaring the funded amounts that they received the last three financial years, so that the Managing Authority to be able to monitor their compliance with the de minimis rule. The Managing Authority will be provided with access in data base, in order observe the gathering of community grants which exists in Greece and they will cooperate with the corresponding authority in Cyprus, as is required, in order to ascertain every single official declaration.

#### 2.4 Solutions for amplifying the effectiveness of the program

For the actions' acceleration the Special Management Agency, has planned to fulfill technical meetings, and visits to beneficiaries and corporate schemes which deal with delays, so that the necessary solutions to be given in order to expedite the procedures. Moreover, the Managing Authority, is collaborating with other institutions – when it is necessary – so that the best maturity of procedures to be achieved. Last but not least, the regulation flow of National Financing is an outcome that aroused from the normal collaboration of the responsible institutions, among both countries.

## **Conclusion**

In the previous parts of the article, the contribution of European programs, in Greece economy where analyzed, as well as, we cited the European Programs – Sectoral, Regional and Territorial ones-, concerning the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020, by emphasizing on its axis of priorities.

At the second part of the present article there was an extended reference on the Territorial Cooperation Program "Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus 2014-2020", where we tried to approach the main objectives of the program, the integration criteria, the problems that decelerate the procedures and we mentioned some solutions for amplifying the effectiveness of the Program.

As far as concerning the 2021-2027 programming period, the New Framework of Regional Development and Cohesion Policy expects to provide more opportunities for synergies within EU, as well as to remove cross border obstacles and support interregional innovation projects.

In particular, Interregional and cross-border cooperation will be facilitated by the new possibility for a region to use parts of its own allocation to fund projects anywhere in Europe jointly with other regions.

The new generation of interregional and cross-border cooperation ("Interreg") programs will help Member States overcome cross-border obstacles and develop joint services. The Commission proposes a new instrument for border regions and Member States eager to harmonise their legal frameworks, the European Cross-Border Mechanism.

Building on a successful pilot action from 2014-2020, the Commission proposes to create the Interregional Innovative Investments. Regions with matching 'smart specialisation' assets will be given more support to build pan-European clusters in priority sectors such as big data, circular economy, advanced manufacturing or cybersecurity.

Key words: partnership agreement 2014-2020, territorial cooperation programs, Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus

## **References**

Neil A., Neil H., professor Jeremy A., (2012). Regional Development and Spatial Planning in an Enlarged European Union, p. 4-6.

Duhr S., Stead D., Zonnereld W.,(2007). The Europeanization of Spatial Planning through Territorial Cooperation, Journal, vol. 22, No 3 p.293.

European Regional Development Fund (2017). Annual Report “Report of Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus” fulfillment. Issues which influence the program’s absorption and the measures that are taken into consideration, published 22 May 2018.

Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 (2018). “Financing priorities, Sectoral Operational Programs, Regional Operational Programs, Territorial Cooperation Programs”.

European Commission (2014). “ Cross Border Cooperation”

Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework 2014-2020 (2015). “Expected results from the Program appliance”.

European Commission (2018). “Regional Development and Cohesion Policy beyond 2020”, “Interreg”.

European Commission (2016). Evaluations “Evaluation Planning of Territorial Cooperation Program Interreg V-A Greece-Cyprus 2014-2020”.