



europeanpatients' forum

# Getting Involved in Cohesion Policy



**Spring capacity-building Seminar**

Brussels, 13 April 2011

Walter Atzori, Programme Officer, EPF

# OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

## Overview

- Understanding **Cohesion Policy** and **Structural Funds**
- Understanding what role **patient organisations** can play in Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds
  - > Policy preparation EU/national level
  - > Access to funding
- Identifying **obstacles** to patient organisations' participation in Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds at **EU** and **national** level
- How to fine tune the **EPF Toolkit** on Structural Funds to address obstacles and what other role EPF could play
- Agreeing on a **key message** for the plenary

# OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

## How will we work?

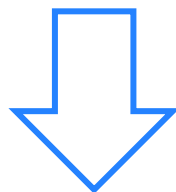
- Brief presentation on Cohesion Policy and why it matters to patients and patient organisations
- Focus-group like discussion on:
  - > obstacles for patient organisations to influencing Cohesion Policy
  - > obstacles for patient organisations to accessing Structural Funds
- Brief presentation of the Toolkit and how to fine-tune it to address identified problems
- Agreement on a key message for the plenary

# Cohesion Policy: a quick overview

# COHESION POLICY

## Cohesion Policy and Structural Fund

- **Cohesion Policy** is the EU's strategy to promote and support the "overall harmonious development" of its Member States and regions
- The **Structural Funds** together with the **Cohesion Fund** are the Cohesion Policy's key financial instruments. They provide the financial resources to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across European regions.



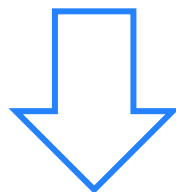
## 2 Structural Funds

- **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**
  - > "hard investment"
- **European Social Fund (ESF)**
  - > "soft investment"

# COHESION POLICY

## Cohesion Policy and Structural Fund

- **Cohesion Policy** is the EU's strategy to promote and support the "overall harmonious development" of its Member States and regions
- The **Structural Funds** together with the **Cohesion Fund** are the Cohesion Policy's key financial instruments. They provide the financial resources to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across European regions.



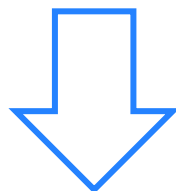
## 3 Objectives

- **Convergence** (poorest regions)
- **Competitiveness and Employment** (more developed regions)
- **Territorial co-operation** (all regions)

# COHESION POLICY

## Cohesion Policy and Structural Fund

- **Cohesion Policy** is the EU's strategy to promote and support the "overall harmonious development" of its Member States and regions
- The **Structural Funds** together with the **Cohesion Fund** are the Cohesion Policy's key financial instruments. They provide the financial resources to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across European regions.



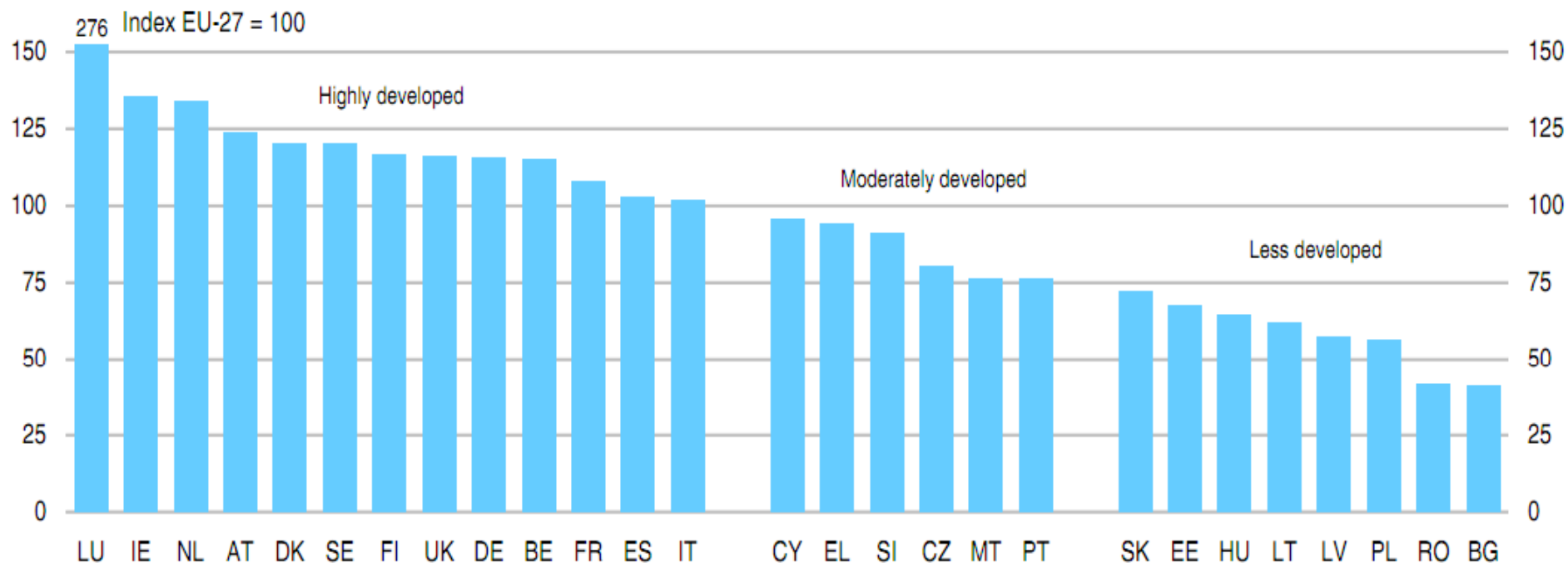
## Implemented through 7-year programming rounds

- Current programming period    2007-2013
- Next programming period        2014-2020

# COHESION POLICY

## Why do we need Cohesion Policy?

- Because economic disparities among 27 EU Member States are great....



Note: RO 2007

Source: Eurostat



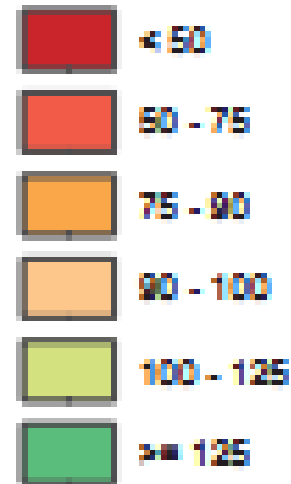
# COHESION POLICY

- ..but even more among their regions..



1.4 GDP per head (PPS), 2007

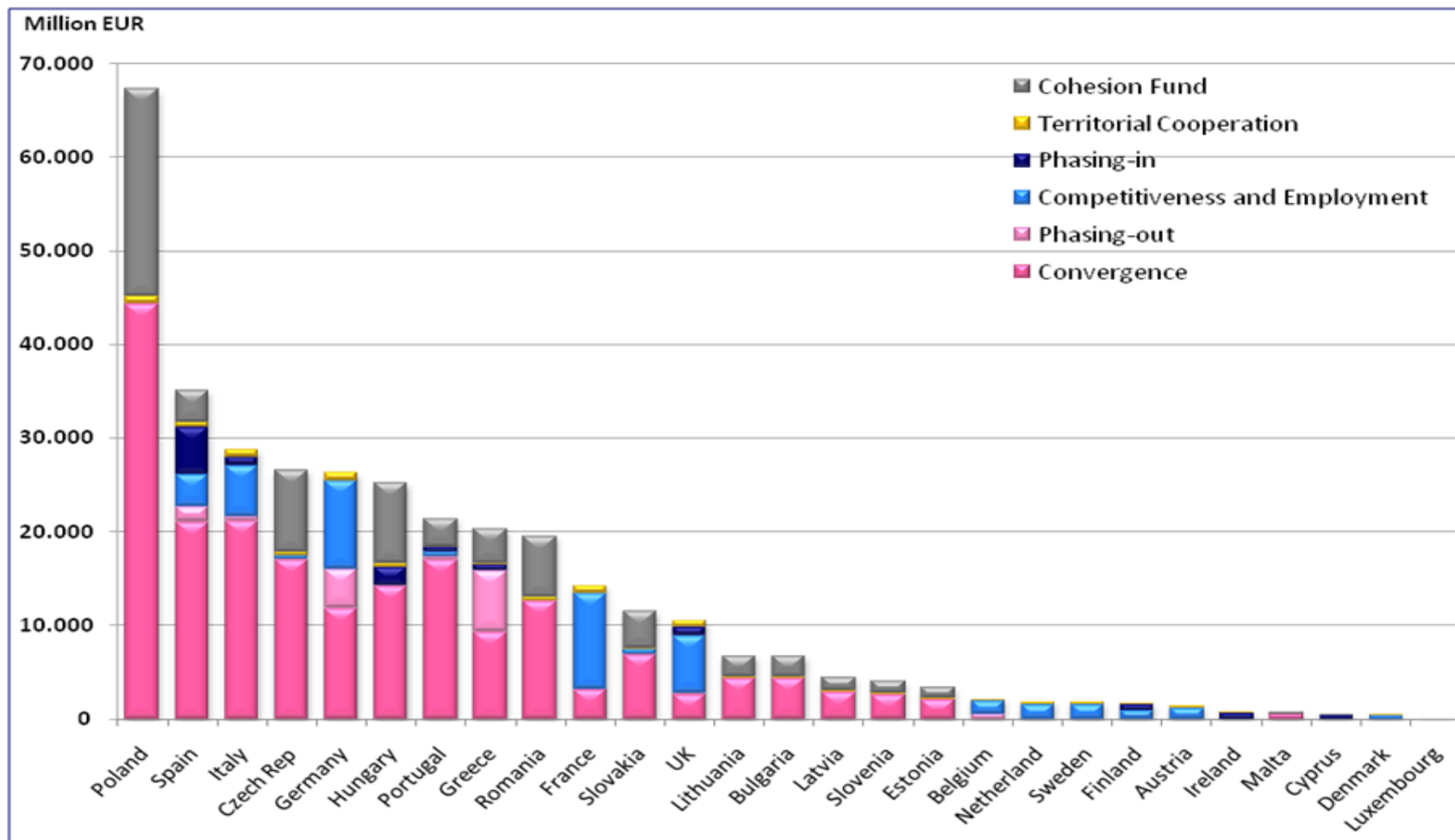
Index, EU-27 = 100



# COHESION POLICY

## Who benefits the most from Cohesion Policy?

Cohesion Policy financial allocations 2007-2013 across EU countries by objectives



# COHESION POLICY

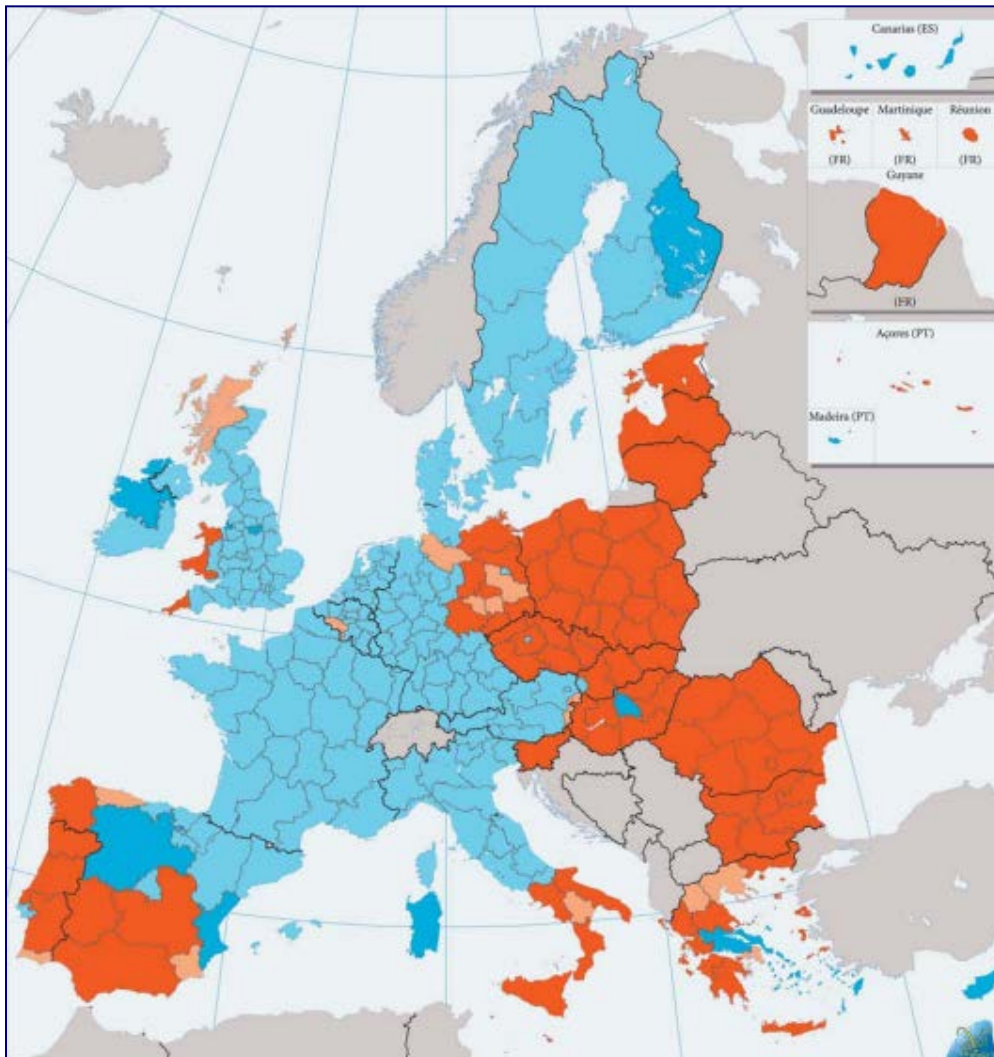
Who benefits the most from Cohesion Policy?

Want to know more?



From 2007 to 2013

-  Convergence
-  Phasing-out
-  Phasing-in
-  Regional competitiveness and employment



# Influencing Cohesion Policy

# COHESION POLICY

## Decision-making

Two-level decision making:

European level

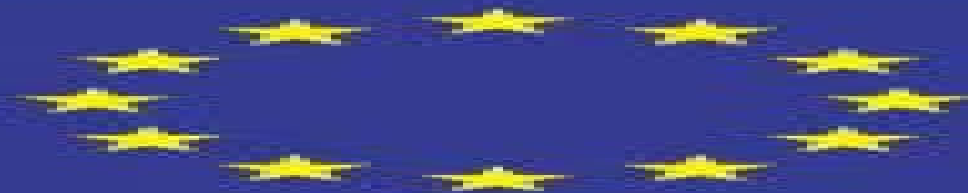


National level



# COHESION POLICY

## EU-level decision-making



### ● Regulations on Structural Funds

- > General Regulation on Structural Funds
- > Regulation on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- > Regulation on the European Social Fund (ESF)

### ● Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion

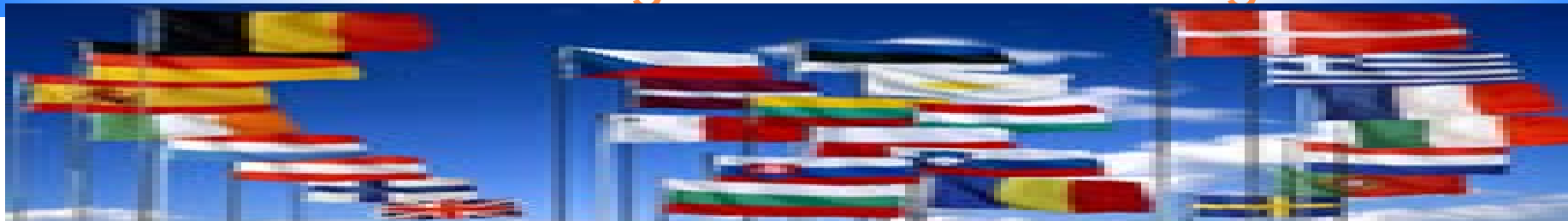
- > Setting up the priorities for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020



**The European Commission will launch an EU level Consultation with stakeholders in 2012**

# COHESION POLICY

## National/regional decision-making



Each Member State prepares:

- **A National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 27 in place 2007-2013**

Document defining the strategy chosen by the Member State and proposes a list of operational programmes that it hopes to implement

- **Operational Programmes (OPs) approx. 450 in place for 2007-2013**

The NSRF is implemented through a certain number of regional and horizontal **Operational Programmes (OPs)**, each one including a certain number priorities, which in turn are broken down in measures and axes

**Responsibility for the implementation of Structural Funds lies with the Member States and their regions**





# COHESION POLICY

## National/regional decision-making

- Can stakeholders get involved?

### Partnership Principle

#### Article 11 General Structural Funds Regulation:



Member States are required to involve all relevant partners, **including NGOs**, throughout all stages of Structural Funds from design to final evaluation



#### Implementation of partnership responsibility of the Member States

- > Open on line written Consultations
- > National/regional round tables
- > Ad-hoc expert committees

# COHESION POLICY

## Current Programming period 2007-2013

- **Health** has been listed as a priority for Structural Funds for the first time in 2007
  - > many countries are using Structural Funds to support health projects and investment
- Structural Funds invest in other areas relevant to patient organisations such as:
  - > Social Inclusion,
  - > Anti-discrimination
  - > Access to employment
  - > Education and training
  - > Urban projects and local services
  - > ..

# COHESION POLICY

...looking at 2014-2020...

Why should patient organisations get involved?

- To ensure that health remains a priority for Cohesion Policy 2014-20
- To promote health mainstreaming in Structural Funds
- To ensure that patients perspective is fully integrated in Cohesion Policy from design to final evaluation
- To ensure that patients are recognised as a special target group
- To ensure access to funds to small NGOs
- To ensure a patient voice in relevant monitoring committee
- ...
- ...

# COHESION POLICY

## Some general challenges

- Competition in Cohesion Policy is extremely high
  - > **Sectorial level:** competition between different eligible policy areas
  - > **Geographical level:** competition between different countries and regions (richer vs. poorer countries/regions, urban areas vs. rural areas, peripheral vs. central regions etc.)
  - > **Governance level:** competition between national and regional authorities and between regional and local authorities
  - > **Stakeholder level:** competition between stakeholders within the same policy area
- Need to cooperate with other stakeholders within and beyond health sector (e.g. other civil society organisations)
- Technical competences are needed to participate

# COHESION POLICY

## Can participating in decision-making make a difference?

### Bad news

Influencing the Structural Funds requires NGOs to invest time and energy in preparing for a consultation, establish contacts with other stakeholders and building working relationships with the officials concerned.

### Good news

Although influencing policy-making is hard exercise there exist many examples from all across Europe of NGO groups which have successfully managed to influence Structural Funds design.



Including people with long term mental and physical health conditions as a special target group for the European Social Fund in England and Wales

# Accessing Structural funding

# COHESION POLICY

## Funding opportunities

There might exist different opportunities for your organisation. It is important therefore important to first consider whether you are best placed to:

- **Implement a project**
  - > Manage a project
  - > Participating in a project as partner
- **Tender to deliver services under an existing project**
- **Benefit directly from a project set up to support the third sector (capacity-building)**
- **Benefit from technical assistance and global grants opportunities**

# COHESION POLICY

## DIRECTLY-MANAGED EU FUNDING PROGRAMMES

### PHP, FP7, CIP etc..

- Multi-year EU-level funding programme (2007-2013)
- **Management level:** centralised
- **Priorities:** set at EU level
- **Focus:** all EU countries+other depending on programme
- **Annual EU-level call for proposals**
- **Competition for funding at EU level**
- **Multi-country partnership** (from at least 3 different EU countries)
- **Project results** to be applied in more than one EU country

## INDIRECTLY-MANAGED EU FUNDING PROGRAMMES

### STRUCTURAL FUNDS

- Multi-year national or regional level funding programmes (2007-2013)
- **Management level:** decentralised
- **Priorities:** set at national/reg level
- **Focus:** MS and regions with GDP pro-capita < 75% EU average
- **Calls decided by national authorities**
- **Competition for funding at nat. level**
- Partnership, when required, includes only local organisations
- **Project results** apply locally



# COHESION POLICY

## Funding opportunities



European Union



Member States and regions

The **EU does not manage the Structural Funds programmes** and that the national and/or regional authorities are the only ones to grant projects at national/regional level.

**It is thus not possible to apply for any Structural Funds project at the EU level**

# COHESION POLICY



European Regional Development Fund  
(ERDF)

DG Regional Policy (DG REGIO)

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/atlas2007/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/atlas2007/index_en.htm)



European Social Fund (ESF)

DG Employment and Social Affairs (DG EMPL)

<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp?langId=en>

# COHESION POLICY

## Funding opportunities for patient organisations

- **The European Social Fund:**

Patient organisations could apply for various types of projects under different ESF priorities both as individual beneficiaries and as part of consortia. Such projects could be related to:

- Health information campaigns
- Screening programmes
- Health literacy programmes
- Antidiscrimination measures promotion for people with disability and/or chronic condition (when applicable)
- Training for informal carers
- Access to employment and vocational training for patients
- Improving access to services for disadvantaged groups and minorities
- Capacity-building

# COHESION POLICY

## The EPF Toolkit



We need to know how to fine-tune the **Toolkit** to address your needs

# Discussion

# COHESION POLICY

## Discussion

### **Patient organisations influencing in Cohesion Policy**

- What are the perceived barriers to patient organisations' participation in Cohesion Policy making at European level? And at national level?

### **Access to funding**

- Why are patient organisations not so interested in applying for Structural funding?
- What are the perceived barriers to patient organisations' accessing Structural Funds for projects?