Environmental Concerns in the Cohesion Policy funds

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Plan of the presentation

1. Two evaluation studies
2. Categorisation: direct vs indirect environmental investments
3. CP financing for environment: an overview
4. Water sector
5. Waste sector
6. Total environmental investments per capita
7. Conclusions

Two evaluation studies on environment in Cohesion Policy

1. Ex-post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007-2013, focusing on the European Regional Development and the Cohesion Fund (WP 6 of DG Regio Ex-post Evaluation): http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/pdf/expost2013/wp6_final_en.pdf
2. Study on the integration of environmental concerns in the Cohesion Policy funds (ERDF, ESF and CF): results, evolution and trends through 3 programming periods (2006-06, 2007-13 and 2014-20) (on-going)

Categorisation: direct environmental investments

Direct environmental investments:

- waste
- water
- air quality
- biodiversity
- land rehabilitation
- climate mitigation and adaptation and risk prevention

Categorisation: indirect environmental investments

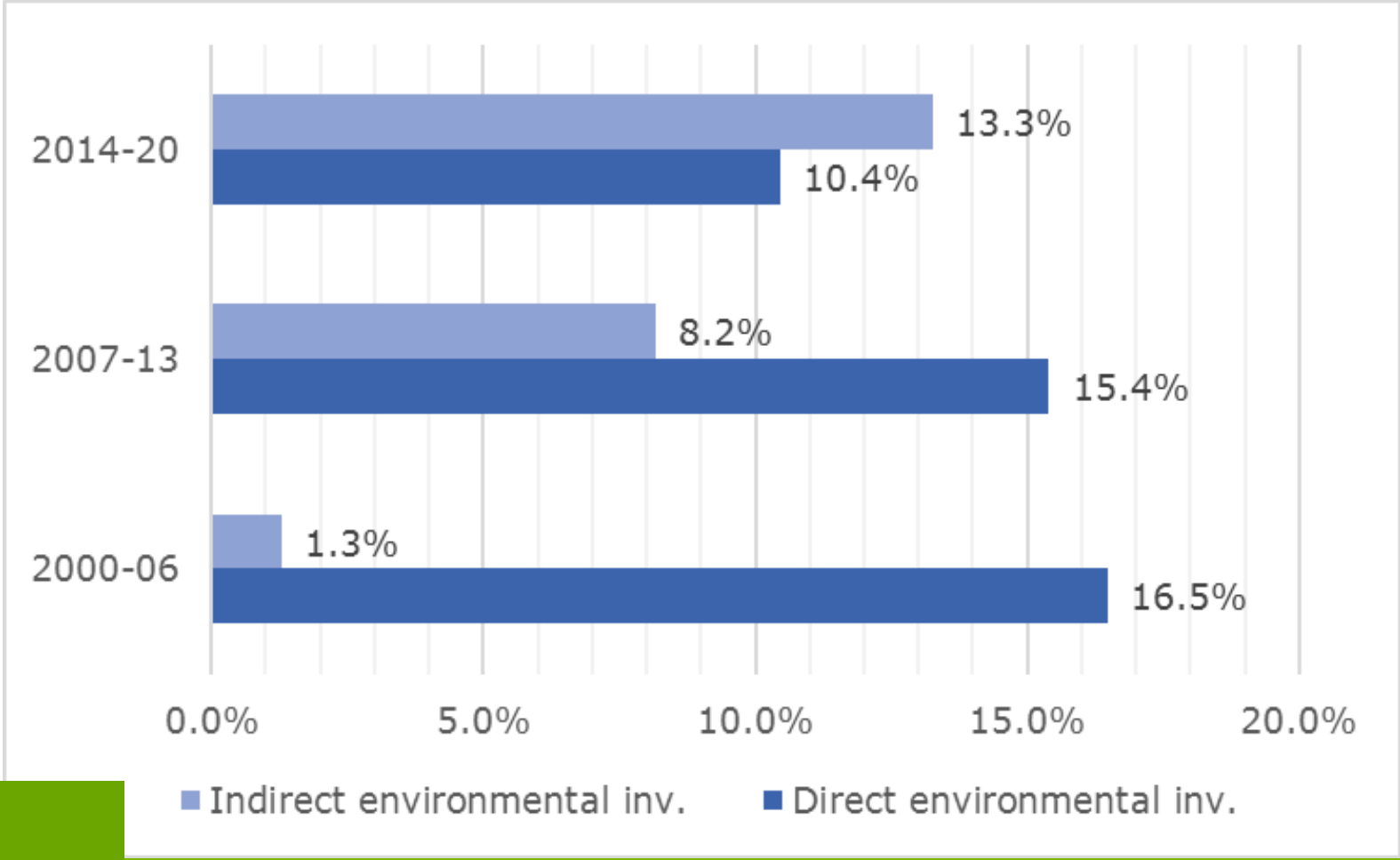
Indirect environmental investments include environment-related investments in:

- energy
- transport
- tourism
- business development/R&D

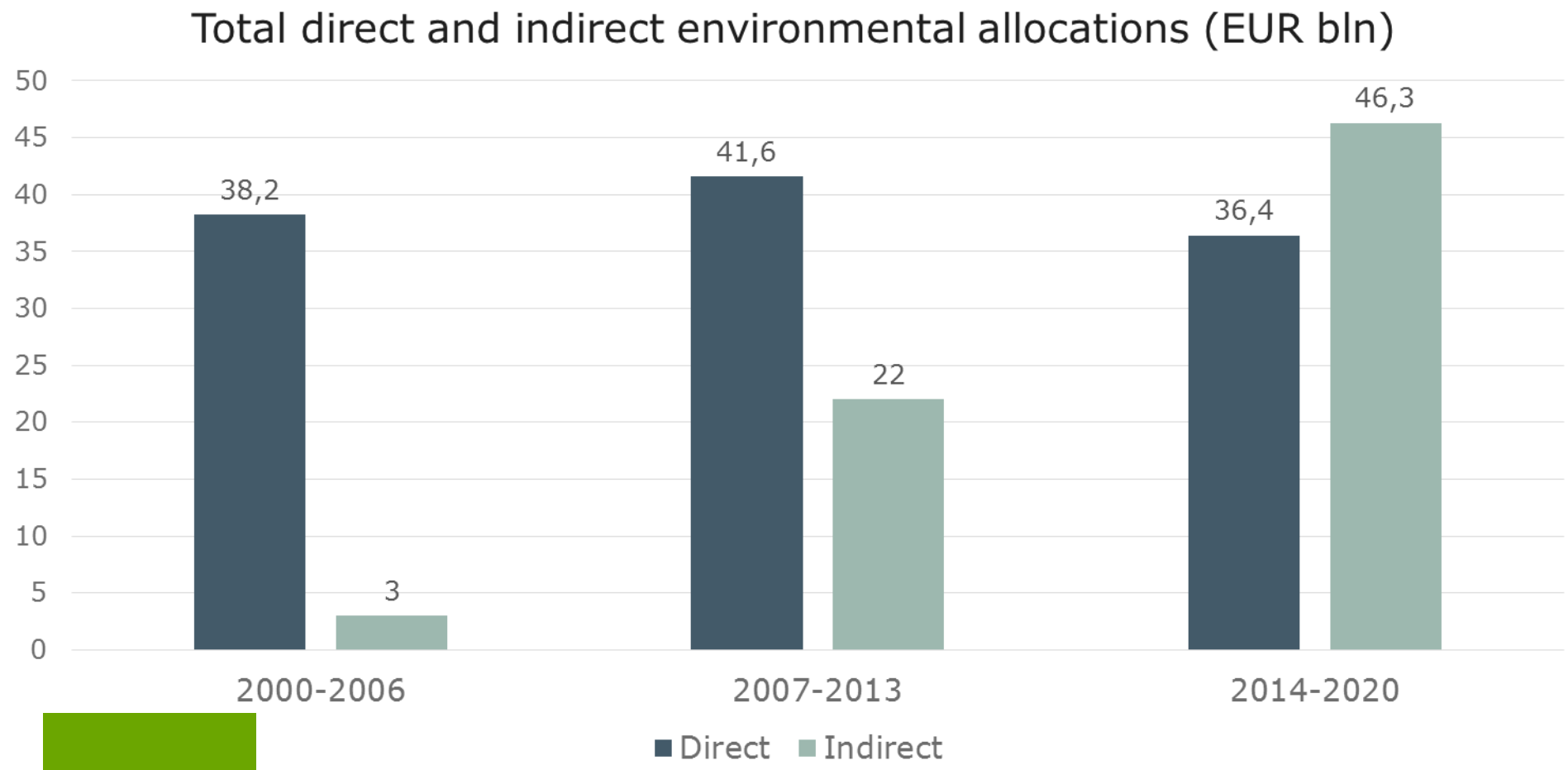
Categorisation across programming periods: example

Category	2000-2006 Fields of Intervention	2007-2013 Priority Themes	2014-2020 Intervention Fields
Climate mitigation and adaptation & Risk prevention		49. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change	23. Environmental measures aimed at reducing and/or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions
			87. Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks
		53. Risk prevention	88. Risk prevention and management of non-climate related natural risks
		54. Other measures to preserve the environment and prevent risks	

Environmental investments as a share of total Cohesion Policy investments



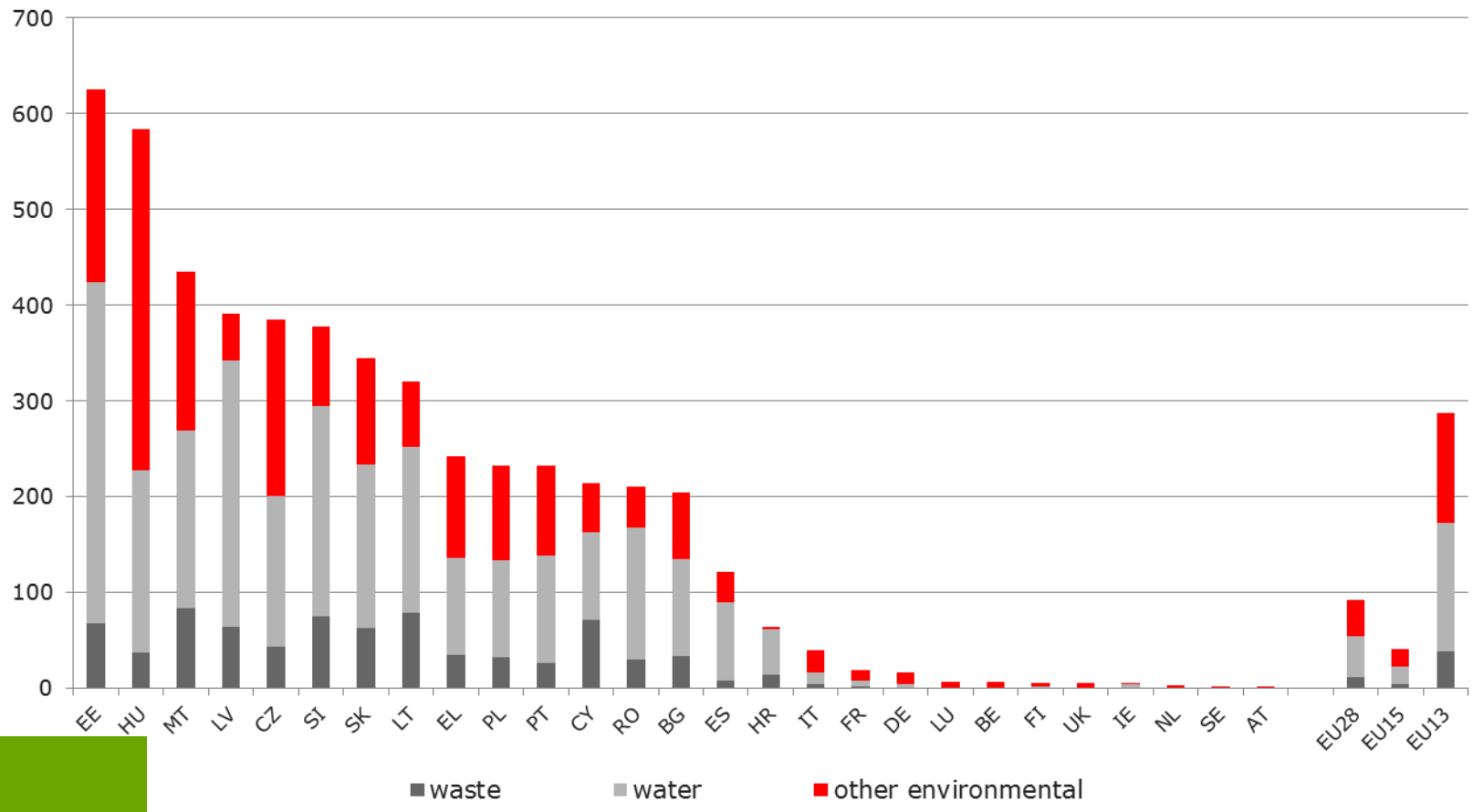
Environmental investments: total direct and indirect allocations



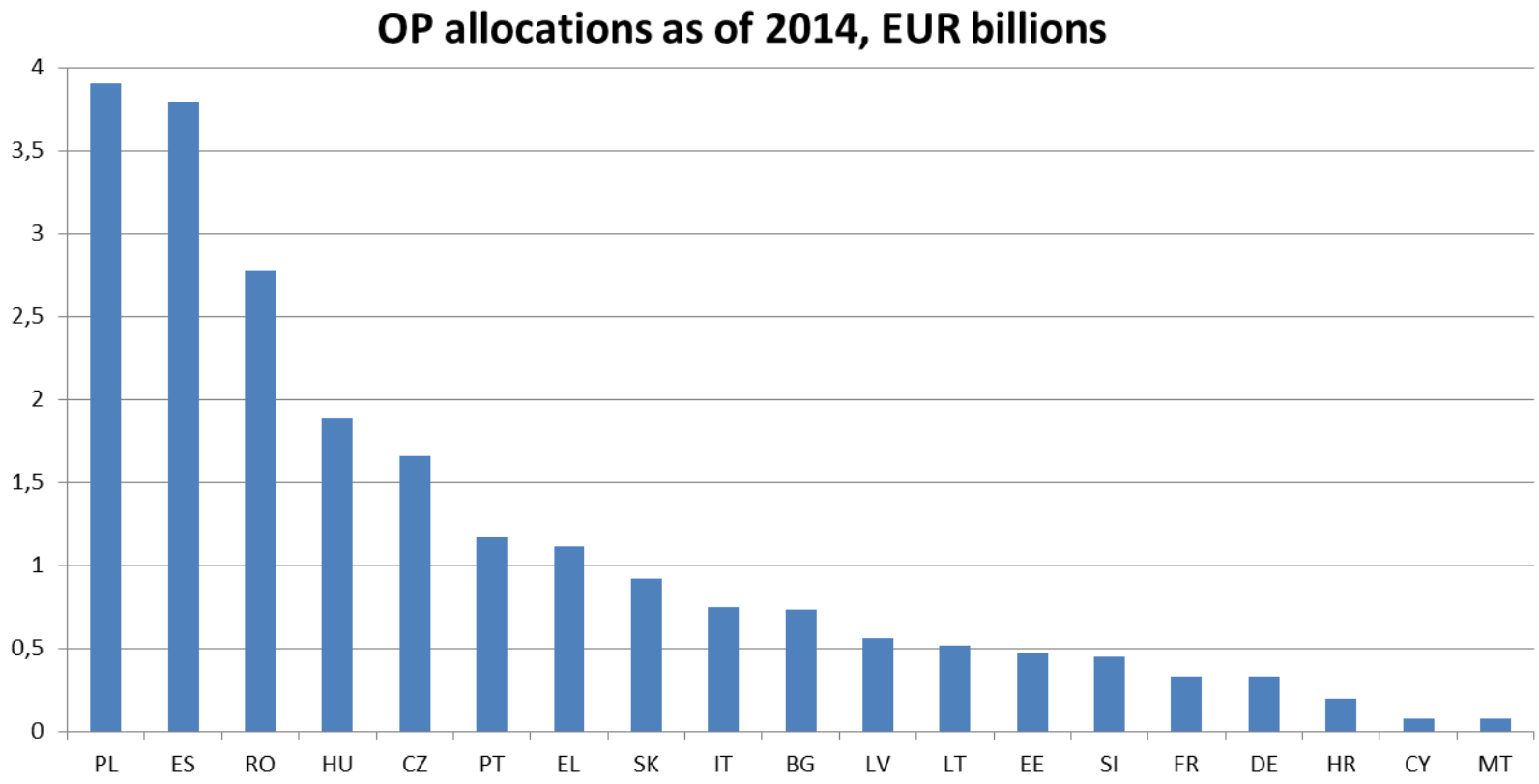
Why are indirect environmental investments increasing?

- ‘Lisbon earmarking’ for EU-15 (2007-2013): 60% - 75% to be allocated to themes corresponding to Lisbon objectives.
- For 2014-2020 –11 thematic objectives of the CP aligned with Europe 2020 Strategy.
- ERDF regulation-based thematic concentration (2014-2020): 50%-80% to be spent on innovation, digital agenda, support for SMEs and low-carbon economy; 12%-20% of ERDF resources should be spent on investments fostering low-carbon economy.

Environmental CP investments per capita 2007-2013 (decided OP amounts as of 2014, EUR)



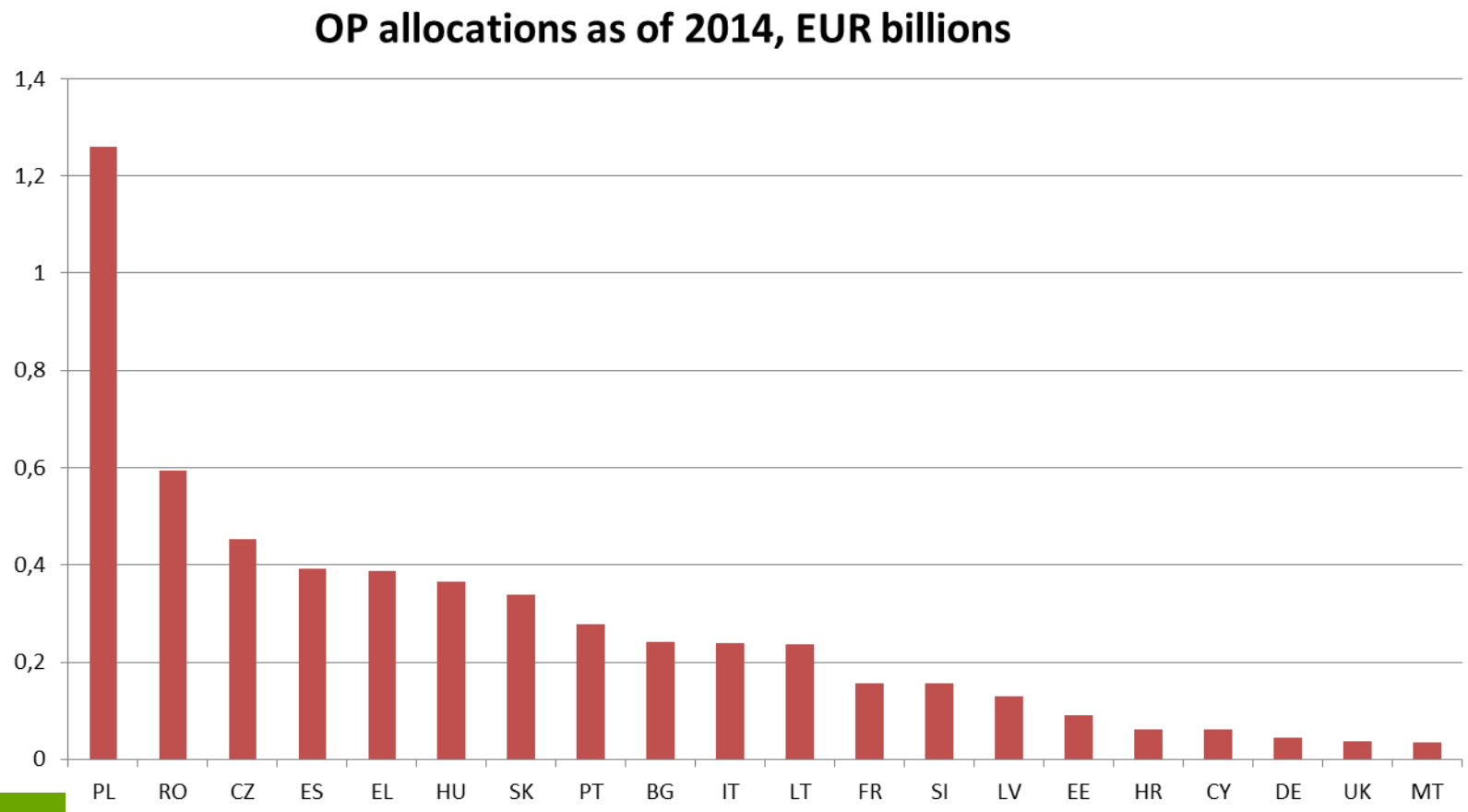
Water sector
Financial allocations 2007-2013



Water sector – main findings

- Water is the largest sector of environmental spending, accounting for 40-50% of total direct environmental investments.
- In 2014, the overall expenditure rate for the water sector was 73%.
- Investments strengthened implementation of the UWWTD and Drinking Water Directive.
- Results of the interventions in 2007-2013 include almost 6 million people with new connections to supply of clean drinking water and almost 7 million people with new or upgraded wastewater treatment facilities.

Waste sector: financial allocations



Waste sector – main findings

- Financial allocations to waste sector accounted for approximately 12-15% of direct environmental investments.
- The expenditure rate (2014) 55%, in Greece and Romania below 50%, which raises concerns.
- Complicated projects, sometimes difficult to implement by local authorities lacking specialised knowledge.
- The investments resulted in increased rates of recycling in several MS including Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Spain.

Conclusions

- Environmental investments (direct and indirect) constitute an important part of the CP: in the current and previous financial periods they make up over 20% of the financial allocations.
- In some MS (EU13), CP investment play a major role providing over 50% of funding for such sectors like water and waste.
- Low rates of expenditure in some MS, in particular in the waste sector, raise concerns about the capacity to meet EU targets.
- Environmental projects are often complex and require a high level of competence of the authorities concerned. Waste management projects in municipalities deserve particular attention (WFD).
- Evaluations of CP environmental investments should be better aligned with assessments of the implementation of EU Directives.

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Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

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