



Preliminary findings on the RDP programming process

*EU Rural Networks' Assembly
26 November 2015*

Outline

Main groups of preliminary findings:

- Complementarity / Coordination
- Transparent communication on results/budgets
- Simplification
- Good practice

Complementarity / coordination

- majority of the RDPs: the **objectives** are **closely linked** and contribute **to all three objectives of EU2020** Strategy
- **Coordination and alignment between ESI Funds is ensured** in 63% of the cases via different mechanisms:
 - coordination committees with representatives of the concerned bodies.
 - joint monitoring committees and thematic networks at national level
 - inter-funds coordination groups at regional level.
- Half of the EAEs confirm that there is **consistency and adequate coordination between the two CAP Pillars** and coordination mechanisms are outlined
- The need for multilevel policy coordination at European, country and regional level, constitutes an **institutional challenge** for some MS

Transparent communication on results/budgets

- Legal requirements:
 - CPR Regulation Article 16:
The Commission shall prepare a report on the outcome of the negotiations concerning the Partnership Agreements and the programmes, including an overview of the key issues, for each Member State, by 31 December 2015.
- Final result – more than a report:
 - **Result oriented** COM communication on delivering on the Union's priorities through ESIFs
 - Open data platform – **transparent communication on targets/financial envelopes**
- Followed by yearly summary of implementation reports (EP/Council)
 - Based on info provided in annual implementation reports
 - **Regular and sound assessment of RDP implementation**

Sound evaluation – 1st step

- Legal requirement:
 - RD Regulation Article 79:
Syntheses at Union level of the ex ante and ex post evaluation reports shall be undertaken under the responsibility of the Commission. The syntheses of the evaluation reports shall be completed at the latest by 31 December of the year following the submission of the relevant evaluations
 - Final result – more than a synthesis of ex-ante evaluations:
 - overall analysis of the ex ante evaluations, taking into account the programming documents, complemented by survey and interviews with managing authorities and stakeholders
 - case studies for six thematic clusters, including the new measure "risk management"
 - **examples of good practices / potential improvements**
- ⇒ **Useful and forward looking feedback from the RD programming exercise**

Simplification

- CAP simplification exercise (started early in 2015)
 - **Suggestions from MS** being analysed
 - **Council recommendations**
- Implementation of the new framework (SCO, CLLD, e-Governance, gold-plating, proportionality of controls)
 - Study on the **implementation of simplification** option in the **programmes** (2016)
 - High level group on Monitoring **Simplification for Beneficiaries** of the ESI Funds (2015-2018)
<https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/simplify-esif>
 - Identify **good practice** in matters concerning the **reduction of administrative burden on beneficiaries**
 - Make recommendations to improve the uptake of simplification measures

Focus on simplification for beneficiaries

*What makes the implementation difficult for beneficiaries?
(but also for administrations?)*

- First messages / issues to be further discussed:
 - the **challenges of other EU rules** such as public procurement and state aid in the context of the implementation of the funds
 - the lack of **co-ordination** between the ESI Funds and **other EU funds** such as Horizon 2020
 - **Goldplating** and the **lack of trust between the different layers** of management and control, **additional national rules**
 - **risk averse** authorities who lack confidence to use the new tools and simplification measures
 - "**preoccupation with compliance over results**" and the conflict between results and compliance with the **focus of many authorities on the control side**, often as a result **of Commission and ECA audit** (proportionality of audits/controls)

Good practice

Implementation can be improved and simplified by sharing good practice ("bottom-up" approach)

- Strategic programming (in ex-ante evaluations):
 - bottom-up analysis: **quantification of the programme's contribution to each EU2020 (and thematic/CAP objective)**, in terms of percentages
 - "reverse intervention logic" (results chains), **looking for references in the concrete results from the previous programming period**, and assessing synergies and conflicts between new objectives with a numerical score
 - **use of two parameters: relevance** (high, medium or indirect) and **impact** (high, medium, medium/low, low or very low) – double "score" for objectives and expected effect

Good practice

- Financial instruments:
 - Foreseen to facilitate access to financing for new SMEs, focus on innovation and competitiveness
 - **Complementarity with grants depending on the needs**, e.g., combined with grants under investments in processing, marketing and development of new products, but support granted by FI for development of non-agricultural activities and investment in forestry
- Coordination:
 - **coordination arrangements with the MAs of other ESIF programmes**: participate in each other's Monitoring Committee meetings, establishment of joint regional MC or M&E coordination of all ESIF programmes at the national level
 - MA responsible for AEC measures has effectively **shaped the measures simultaneously with the greening** under Pillar I. Director of Direct Payment Department in charge of everyday coordination and management.


Good practice

- **Complementarity:**
 - the evaluators assessed potential **synergies/duplications** between the RDP and other ESIF programmes **by themes**: water, waste & energy; landscape & environment; sustainable livestock; wider rural economy and quality of life; and products of high quality.
- **Simplification:**
 - A **survey of staff involved in RDP administration**, about the organisational framework and staff capacity, with reference to experience from previous programming periods was used for **diagnosing growing administrative burdens**.

... and much more to be published in the ex-ante evaluation synthesis soon

Ideas for discussion

- **Result oriented approach**
 - Better targeting and evaluation / **communication on achievements**
 - **Complementarity / coordination** of EU instruments
 - Current "**preoccupation with compliance over results**"
- **Dissemination of good practice**
 - **Experience from the setting up of financial instruments and risk management tools**
 - **Practical methods** to evaluate / quantify results and impacts
 - **Surveys, involvement of practitioners** to detect burdensome / risk prone type of support
 - **Capacity building and peer to peer exchange** between MAs and other actors involved
- **Continuity versus simplification**
 - **What could be simplified without a major reprogramming?**



Thank you for your attention