

Explanatory note on the availability of expenditure data at NUTS3 level by priority theme 2012

There is no obligation for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF) programmes to report financial data at NUTS3. However, NUTS3 data can be very interesting to analyse which locations benefit most from the different type of interventions.

The ex post evaluation of Cohesion Policy programmes 2007-2013, focusing on the ERDF / CF – Work Package Zero 'Data collection and quality assessment' analysed categorisation data for 2007-2012 available to the European Commission Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, showing that about 30% of the amounts allocated by the programmes is reported at NUTS3. 220 out of 315 OPs report at NUTS 2 or less detailed level, 62 report allocations at both NUTS3 and less detailed, and 33 have a complete breakdown at NUTS3.

There is a large variation across Member States concerning the reporting of location data by priority theme. Whereas Malta has no difficulties to report at NUTS3, CZ, HU, IT and PT provide more than 70% of the funding allocated at that level. DE, LV, NL and SK report more than half of the amounts at NUTS3. On the other hand, eleven Member States do not provide any information at NUTS3 (AT, CY, EE, ES, FI, GR, IE, LT, LU¹, PL, SE). Furthermore, only a few territorial cooperation programmes report amounts allocated to selected projects at detailed localisation level.

Going into further detail, there are large variations in NUTS3 breakdown at:

- Programme type: from about 2% of the total allocation for ETC programmes to 38% for regional programmes;
- Programme size: from 16% for programmes smaller than 172 EUR million² to 31% for larger programmes;
- Priority theme categories³: from 13% for 'IT services and infrastructure' to 50% for 'Social infrastructure' (see Figure 3, where the size of the bubble represents the share of the priority theme out of the total amounts allocated);
- Economic activity: except for some activities which have minor allocations, NUTS3 breakdown ranges from 20% for Transport to 57% for Construction.

Although programmes do not generally impose an obligation to encode operations at NUTS3, this geographical detail is more often available to MAs than is reported in SFC. Actually, MA interviews conducted by Work Package Zero indicated that location is often recorded with even greater detail than NUTS3, i.e. local administrative units.

¹ The geographical coverage of NUTS0, 1, 2 and 3 is identical for Luxembourg. In other words, even if Luxembourg reports at a less detailed level, the information can be treated as NUTS3 (see also section 1.2).

² The threshold splits the programmes into two classes based on investment size, each with a similar number of programmes, i.e. 158 and 159.

³ Priority themes categories are based on the classification available in the file 'ERDF/ESF/CF Priority theme overview 2007-2012.xls'. See the Regional Policy InfoREGIO website at www.ec.europa.eu.

The enclosed dataset indicates if reporting of NUTS3 location in SFC is complete or partial for each OP, or whether instead no detail is provided on amounts allocated to the most detailed location level. This is complemented with information from MAs interviews on the feasibility to collect expenditure data at NUTS3 by priority theme, at least for some programme operations.