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The University of Manchester

Analysis of the Survey

REGIO-INNO-EVAL Project

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1 Introduction

This report presents the results of an initial analysis of the results of an on-line survey of representatives of Managing Authorities or other persons with experience or knowledge of the implementation and evaluation of innovation support measures within the context of a study for DG REGIO into evaluation activities related to innovation support instruments co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The overall objective of this study is to examine the methods applied to evaluating the effects of publicly funded innovation activities and to suggest relevant methods, or a combination of them, for the most common innovation activities supported by the ERDF.

The specific objectives of the study are "to provide a picture of the state of the art of the evaluation of innovation in Member States, provide an analysis of the advantages and limits of available methodologies for assessing different kinds of innovation activities, conduct 15 case studies on good quality evaluations, and draft guidance for managing authorities to support their evaluation activities".

For the purpose of this study, "innovation activities" can be considered as those supported by the ERDF programmes under the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment and European Territorial Co-Operation Objectives (cross-border cooperation programmes only) according to the Community strategic guidelines on cohesion.

The initial analyses presented in this report are intended to provide an insight into the information obtained by the survey in advance of the second Steering Group meeting of the DG REGIO study. It is anticipated that additional, more detailed analyses may be suggested in this meeting and these will be addressed by a subsequent round of analysis.

2 Purpose of the Survey

The survey aimed to obtain information on a number of aspects concerned with the implementation and evaluation of innovation support measures operated at the regional level and with a specific focus on those measures which benefited from co-funding from the ERDF. As such, its primary purpose was two-fold:

- To identify and locate reports arising from the evaluation of ERDF co-supported innovation support measures and similar schemes operated at the regional level across the EU Member States;
- To identify potential examples of evaluation practice at the regional level that could provide the focus for the case studies element of the study.

As a secondary goal, and as a preliminary step towards the identification of representatives of the Managing Authorities who might provide information regarding the potential case studies, it defined a set of contacts for the planned telephone survey of MAs.

Lastly, it sought to gather information on the general situation concerning the state of evaluation of innovation support measures at the regional level. In particular it sought information on the following aspects:

- Name of Managing Authority or non-regional organisation

- Location (country and region) of respondent
- Level of experience with
    - management/implementation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities
    - commissioning or conducting evaluations of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities
- Knowledge of evaluations of innovation activities of the same kind as those supported by the ERDF
- Specific evaluations conducted (including details on title, year completed, evaluator, on-line address)
- Evaluations considered as useful/important or interesting for gaining policy insights or which might be considered as examples of good practice
- Types of innovation support instruments represented by the selected examples
- Information on the most commonly used approaches in the evaluation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities in the region
- Potential difficulties encountered when commissioning or managing evaluations of programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities
- Any general remarks relevant to the survey topic.

The survey also sought to identify additional relevant contacts to whom the questionnaire could be sent (in a 'snow-balling' approach) and also respondents who would be willing to provide additional information in the context of the planned telephone survey of Managing Authorities.

3 Survey Panel and Approach

3.1 Survey Panel

The survey panel was developed from two major sources:

- Contacts suggested by DG REGIO
- Supplementary contacts provided by Technopolis.

In addition, a third set of contacts was generated from:

- Email responses generated by the receipt of the email invitation to participate in the on-line survey
- Suggested contacts identified from the early respondents to the on-line survey in direct response to a specific question asking for such information.

3.2 Approach

An on-line survey was designed and developed using a software programme - Qualtrics© - employed by the University of Manchester Business School. The survey software permits the input data to be downloaded in a variety of formats (Word, pdf, Excel). Typically, we have used the statistical software package SPSS to conduct subsequent analyses of survey data.

The online survey of MAs was launched on 21 April and was formally closed on Tuesday 31 May. The initial sample included 622 representatives of Managing Authorities who received an email invitation to complete the survey (Table 1 below).

The following table provides an overview of the panel distribution and the response rate.

Table 1 Online Survey contacts – sample breakdown

Country	Code	Number sent	Percentage	Removed	sent-adjusted	responses[1]	% responses[2]
Austria	AT	23	3.4	5	18	9	50.0
Belgium	BE	23	3.4	4	19	5	26.3
Bulgaria	BG	9	1.3	2	7	1	14.3
Cyprus	CY	3	0.4	1	2	1	50.0
Czech Republic	CZ	40	6.0	6	34	16	47.1
Denmark	DK	9	1.3	3	6	3	50.0
Estonia	EE	11	1.6	0	11	6	54.6
Finland	FI	14	2.1	1	13	4	30.8
France	FR	136	20.3	18	118	39	33.1
Germany	DE	40	6.0	7	33	13	39.4
Greece	EL	15	2.2	2	13	3	23.1
Hungary	HU	25	3.7	6	19	4	21.1
Ireland	IE	18	2.7	5	13	5	38.5
Italy	IT	36	5.4	4	32	10	31.3
Latvia	LV	7	1.0	2	5	1	20.0
Lithuania	LT	5	0.7	1	4	2	50.0
Luxembourg	LU	7	1.0	0	7	3	42.9
Malta	MT	5	0.7	1	4	2	50.0
Netherlands	NL	7	1.0	0	7	4	57.14
Poland	PL	104	15.5	8	96	32	33.3
Portugal	PT	23	3.4	5	18	5	27.8
Romania	RO	15	2.2	1	14	6	42.9
Slovakia	SK	17	2.5	4	13	5	38.5
Slovenia	SI	8	1.2	1	7	2	28.6
Spain	ES	15	2.2	4	11	6	54.6
Sweden	SE	18	2.7	3	15	8	53.3
United Kingdom	UK	38	5.6	5	33	8	24.2
TOTAL		671	100%	99	572	203	35.5

Notes: 1 – As reported by the survey software for 'completed' questionnaires. 2 – based on the sent-adjusted figures.

In response to the initial rejected emails and other follow-up actions, further emails were sent on 28 April. Emails to new contacts (suggested contacts and replacements) were sent on 6 May.

A full reminder was sent to every eligible member of the panel (i.e. excluding those who were known to have left post or were unable to complete the survey for other reasons) on 9 May using language specific questionnaires and emails (ES, IT, FR, DE, PL) with a view to further increasing the response rate. These national language versions effectively cover a total of 365 contacts from Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland and Spain.

A final, last minute reminder was sent to all contacts on 20 May (in both English and foreign language versions).

Overall, 671 MAs received an invitation to participate in the survey – the initial 622 plus another 49 who were identified in addition to the original set (though some of these were replacements suggested by people that had left post). Based on the number of sent-adjusted contacts, the survey has achieved a response rate of 35.5% which can be considered a very good result for a 'cold-approach' survey of this type.

It should be noted that a closer examination of the questionnaires revealed that a number of partial, incomplete responses (12) were also found to contain some useable data thus these were included in the final analysis set. See Section 4.2.2 for the country distribution of respondents.

As a general comment on the response rate by individual country, although some countries have relatively high rates, the absolute numbers of responses are low. Nevertheless, we feel that, in aggregate, the responses are sufficiently representative of the major types of EU Member State to be able to draw some relatively robust conclusions (see Section 4.2.2).

4 Survey Analysis

4.1 Datasets

We have constructed two datasets from the survey. The first is based on the respondents, for which we have 215 observations (which include information from some partial responses). Out of an initial 369 observations we have dropped 154 observations as they were duplicates or empty.

The second dataset is based on the evaluations provided as examples by the respondents: they were provided with the opportunity to input up to six evaluations and their various characteristics such as their usefulness/importance and the types of measures with which they were associated as well as qualitative data about these evaluations. As some respondents input the maximum of six evaluations while others entered fewer (or none) and since there was some duplication between respondents from the same region, there is not a one–to-one relationship between the numbers of evaluations and respondents. Thus, we have a total of 442 observations for this dataset (i.e. examples of evaluations provided by respondents in response to survey Q9[1] – see also section 4.2.7 for a detailed analysis).

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

4.2.1 Language

In order to maximise the rate of return, the survey was conducted in six languages, namely English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish. Initially all the respondent received an invitation to the English language survey and consequently other language surveys were sent to those people who were assumed to speak the relevant national language. Thus, in addition to

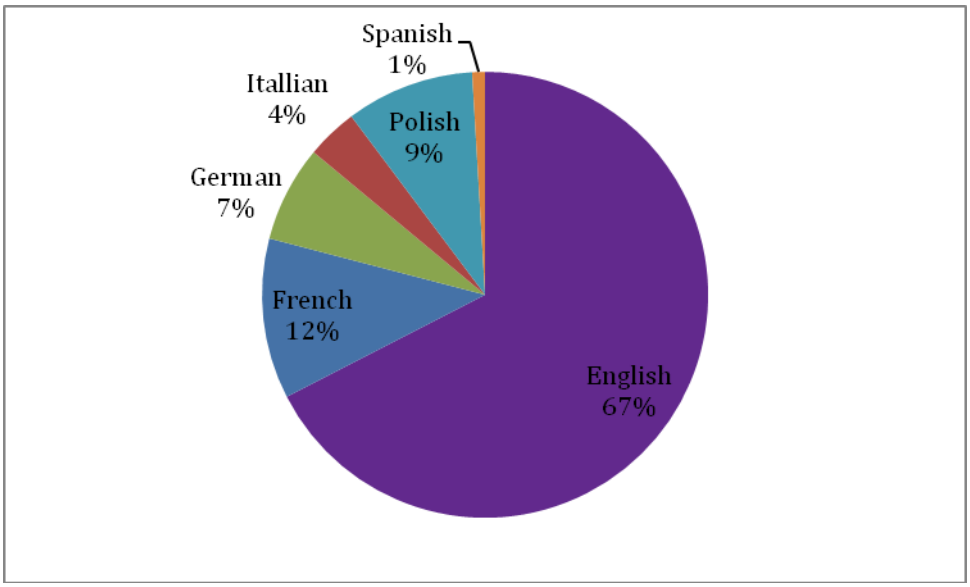
[1] Q9: Please indicate the title(s) of the relevant evaluation(s), the year in which it was undertaken, the name of the organisation or expert which undertook it, the url where a copy can be downloaded (if available).

the countries listed above, panel members in Austria and Luxembourg were sent German- and French-language questionnaires respectively. As explained above, duplicates (where respondents replied in both English and their national language versions) were removed. Out of 215 observations, 67.4% of the respondents filled in the English language survey. The French, German and Polish language surveys were filled in by 25, 20 and 15 people respectively. The Italian language survey was filled in 8 times, while the Spanish language survey was only completed by two people (Table 2 and Figure 1).

Table 2: Survey Language

	Frequency	Percent
English	145	67.4
French	25	11.6
German	15	7.0
Italian	8	3.7
Polish	20	9.3
Spanish	2	0.9
Total	215	100.0

Figure 1: Survey Language



4.2.2 Geographic distribution

Consistent with the survey language results, there a number of countries that tend to dominate in the absolute numbers of respondents. These include France (18.3%), Poland (15%) and Germany (7.5%). The Czech Republic is also highly represented (7.5%). While all EU27 countries are represented in the survey, for some small size countries such as Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta, there is only one respondent. Similarly, we have only 2 responses from Bulgaria, Denmark, Luxembourg and Slovenia (Table 3 and Figure 2).

Table 3: Country Distribution of Respondents

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	1 BE: BELGIQUE-BELGIË	6	2.8
	18 BG: BULGARIA	2	0.9
	29 CZ: CESKÁ REPUBLIKA	16	7.5
	41 DK: DANMARK	2	0.9
	50 DE: DEUTSCHLAND	16	7.5
	108 EE: EESTI	6	2.8
	113 IE: IRELAND	5	2.3
	119 GR: GREECE / ELLADA	4	1.9
	139 ES: ESPAÑA	5	2.3
	168 FR: FRANCE	39	18.3
	206 IT: ITALIA	11	5.2
	235 CY: CYPRUS/ KIBRIS	1	0.5
	240 LV: LATVIJA	1	0.5
	245 LT: LIETUVA	1	0.5
	250 LU: LUXEMBOURG (GRAND-DUCHÉ)	2	0.9
	255 HU: MAGYARORSZÁG	4	1.9
	268 MT: MALTA	1	0.5
	273 NL: NEDERLAND	7	3.3
	292 AT: ÖSTERREICH	9	4.2
	307 PL: POLSKA	32	15.0
	332 PT: PORTUGAL	6	2.8
	345 RO: ROMÂNIA	6	2.8
	360 SI: SLOVENIJA	2	0.9
	364 SK: SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA	5	2.3
	374 FI: SUOMI / FINLAND	4	1.9
	384 SE: SVERIGE	9	4.2
	398 UK: UNITED KINGDOM	11	5.2
	Total	213	100.0
Missing[1]		2	
Total		215	

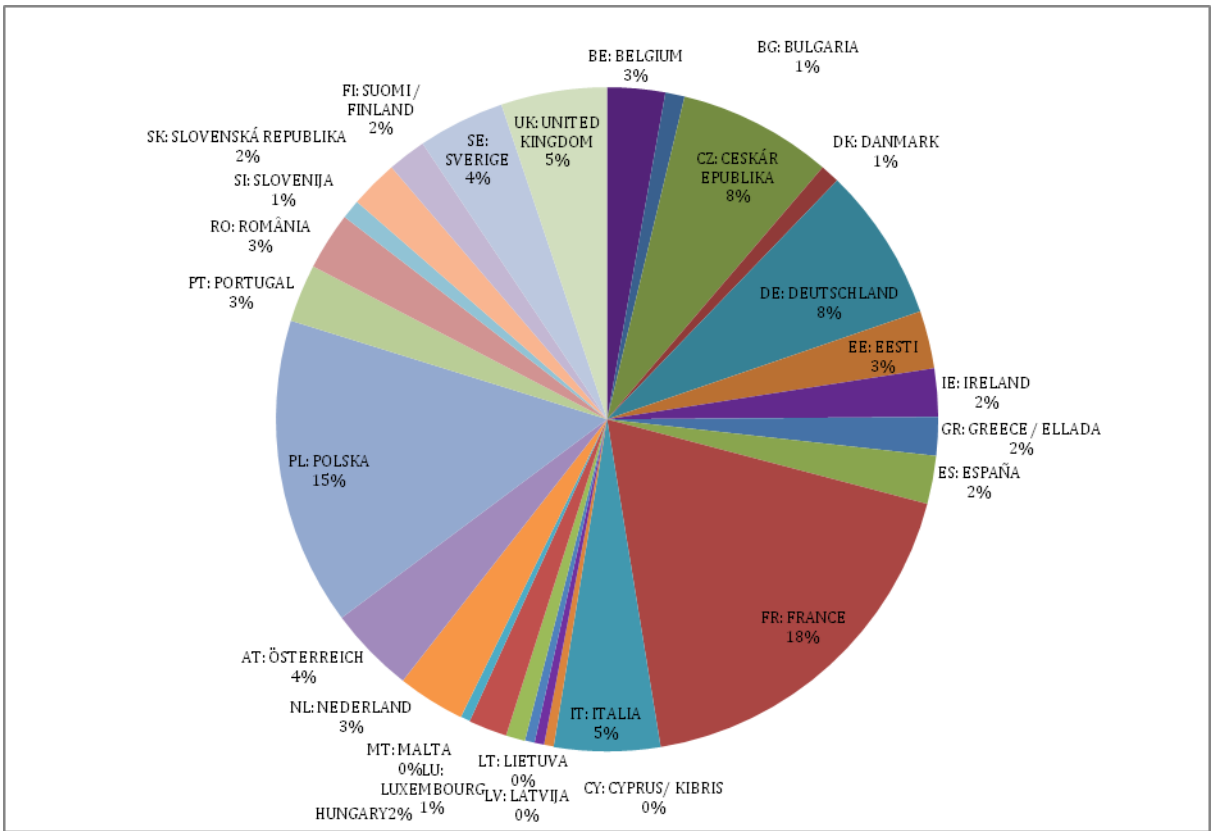
Note: 1 – 'Missing' values are those where a response was expected but no response had been entered, i.e. the response box was empty, and where the overall percentage is calculated from the total number of expected responses.

In terms of broader aggregations of EU Member States, the responses are distributed as: Large MS (France, Germany, UK) – 31%; Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) – 7%; New MS-East (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic) – 31.3%; New MS-Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) – 3.8%; Small and medium MS (Belgium, Ireland,

Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria) – 13.5%; Southern/Mediterranean MS (Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal) – 13.2%[2].

Clearly, one issue concerns the large bias towards French and Polish responses, which make up a third (33.3%) of the total. This was due to the disproportionate representation of these two countries in the panel. In any further analysis which uses geographic location as a variable, measures will be adopted to control for any bias that this distribution may cause.

Figure 2: Country Distribution of Respondents



4.2.3 Innovation management/evaluation expertise

According to the responses, 77% of the respondents have responsibility for the management/implementation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities (Table 4) while 70% of the respondents are responsible for commissioning or conducting evaluations of these programmes (Table 5).

These response rates indicate that around three-quarters of the target audience was familiar with the implementation of ERDF co-funded programmes and similar innovation support measures and just below three-quarters also had familiarity with their evaluation. Thus, the majority of the respondents were relevant to the issues addressed by the survey.

[2] Italy can be allocated to either the Large MS group or the Southern/Mediterranean group. In order to promote the equal distribution of results, we have placed it in the latter group.

Table 4: Do you have responsibility for the management/implementation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities? (Survey Q5)

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	165	76.7
No	50	23.3
Total	215	100.0

Table 5: Are you responsible for commissioning or conducting evaluations of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities? (Survey Q6)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	152	70.7	70.7
No	63	29.3	29.3
Total	215	100.0	100.0

4.2.4 Provision of example evaluations

Over one-third of those respondents who were responsible for evaluations of ERDF co-funded programmes and similar innovation support schemes were able to supply the details of other evaluation activities from their region/country (Table 6).

Table 6: Do you know any evaluations of innovation activities of the same kind as those supported by the ERDF, either in your region or your country? (Survey Q7)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	22	10.2	35.5
	No	40	18.6	64.5
	Total	62	28.8	100.0
Missing	System	153	71.2	
Total		215	100.0	

A total of 442 evaluations were suggested as examples by the respondents (153): 39% of the respondents noted that their suggested evaluations belonged to programmes/schemes funded during the 2000-2006 programming period (or the 2004-2006 programming period in some New Member States), while 84% of the respondents noted that the evaluations they had suggested belonged to programmes/schemes funded or planned in the current 2007-13 period. Finally, 93.5% related to either the former or the latter period (Table 7). Thus, not surprisingly, more of the evaluations provided as examples tended to be those that had been performed more recently. It should be noted that respondents were invited to propose up to six evaluations, thus it was possible for the suggested evaluations to belong to either or both of the relevant programming periods and, therefore, for the percentages indicated above to exceed 100% in total.

Table 7: For which programmes were these evaluations conducted? (Survey Q8)

N=153	Frequency	Valid Percent
For programmes/schemes funded during the 2000-2006 programming period (or the 2004-2006 programming period in some New Member States)	60	39.2
For programmes/schemes funded or planned in the current 2007-13 period	129	84.3
For programmes/schemes funded or planned in the 2000-2006 or 2007-13 periods	143	93.5

Of the 442 suggested evaluations, 196 were accompanied by URLs. Of these, 176 could be traced to actual reports. Of these, 29 were replicates of examples suggested by other respondents, leaving 142 unique documents. A further 24 comprised methodological documents rather than evaluation reports – leaving a total of 123 evaluation reports. Finally, of these five related to *ex ante* assessments or other non- relevant issues and were hence deemed to be outside the scope of the study.

Of the final total of 118, examination of the actual reports suggested that 107 related to ERDF-supported programmes (it was not always made explicitly clear whether ERDF support was involved) and 11 were evaluations that were not related to ERDF funding (referred to as 'specific measures').

4.2.5 Type of innovation measures associated with evaluations

Table 8 shows the types of innovation support measures to which the indicated evaluations were applied. While the different types of measures are generally all well represented, the most common were direct financial support, followed by networks & clusters, collaboration and Technology/Knowledge Transfer. It should also be noted that the categories are not likely to be completely mutually exclusive, thus some degree of overlap or multiple modality of measures is likely to have been reported. Importantly, respondents were given the option of selecting multiple types of innovation support measures for each evaluation, so no cumulative count of measures in Table 8 below is possible.

Table 8: Type of innovation support to which evaluations were applied (Survey Q11)

	Count	%
Direct financial support for innovation activities	170	38%
Networks & Clusters, collaboration and Technology/Knowledge Transfer	157	36%
Innovation management support and dissemination	129	29%
Promotion of science & industry cooperation	120	27%
Creation of Start-ups and Spin-Offs	111	25%
Support for the development of ICT	109	25%
Intermediary bodies, agencies etc.	106	24%
Other innovation support measures	41	9%

The low incidence of 'Other' forms of support (9%) suggests that the categorisation adopted by the questionnaire was relatively inclusive. Closer analysis of the 'other' category indicated that few of the entries actually related to clearly defined alternative types of measures, but were clarifications or more specific innovation and support issues. A list of these other types of measures is provided below:

- Multi-modal measures (e.g. Operational Programmes)
- Transversal evaluations of several measures
- Knowledge Intensive Business Services
- Innovation commercialisation promotion
- Broader innovation framework support
- Sectoral support initiatives:
    - Regional Environment programmes
    - Innovative support to tourism development
    - Renewable energy sources support
    - Innovation in a rural context
- Inter-regional cooperation
- Wage cost subsidies for R&D workers
- Export performance and inward investment support
- Use of programme selection criteria
- Effectiveness of the Managing Authority itself
- New governance structures
- Non-innovation oriented measures

4.2.6 Data collection and data analysis approaches

Respondents reported that the most common data collection methods used in the evaluation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities (Survey Q13) are monitoring data (91%), use of existing surveys or databases (74%), document and literature searches (87%) and participant interviews (86%) as summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: The most commonly used data collection methods in the evaluation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities (Survey Q13)

N= 149	Count	%
Use of existing monitoring data collected during programme lifetime	132	89%
Document and literature searches	126	85%
Participant interviews	125	84%
Use of existing surveys or databases	108	74%
Participant surveys	95	64%
Focus groups, workshops, group meetings, etc.	92	62%
Non-participant interviews	44	30%
Peer reviews	43	29%
Non-participant surveys	29	20%
Bibliometric or patent database studies	8	5%
Other data collection methods	8	5%

It is interesting that the top three most frequently employed methods tend to rely on the use of pre-existing material (i.e. information and data produced prior or external to the evaluation). Also, the next three collection approaches, in terms of frequency of use, provide few surprises as they rely on the 'traditional' forms of data gathering – participant interviews and surveys, and group approaches. Peer review is less frequently used (its use being associated more with project appraisal and assessment) as are non-participant interviews. Non-participant surveys (often associated with counter-factual approaches) are also less frequently employed. Finally, relatively sophisticated (and expensive) technical approaches such as bibliometric and patent studies are used infrequently. The low incidence of 'Other' methods indicates that the list provided was very comprehensive.

In keeping with the above findings, the use of descriptive statistics (94%) forms by far the most frequently used data analysis method (Table 10). Case study analysis (which, strictly speaking is also a data collection methodology) is the second most frequently employed method. Around half the evaluations were reported to use input/output analysis. Less frequently employed approaches were cost benefit analysis, network analysis, econometric analysis and counter-factual approaches. The incidence of these relatively sophisticated analytical approaches appears somewhat higher than might have been expected and perhaps warrants further investigation: for example, to see if they are associated with any specific countries.

Again, the low incidence of 'Other' analytical methods indicates that the list provided was comprehensive.

Table 10: The most commonly used data analysis methods in the evaluation of ERDF co-funded programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities (Survey Q14)

N= 148	Count	%
Descriptive statistics	136	92%
Case studies	107	72%
Input/output analysis	72	49%
Cost benefit approach	44	30%
Network analysis	41	28%
Econometric analysis	32	22%
Counter-factual approaches	28	19%
Other analytical methods	8	5%

A subsidiary question asked was whether there was any level of association between specific data collection and data analysis methodologies and countries. Such an analysis poses two problems, however. Firstly, the choice of methodology may well be dependent upon the type of innovation support measure being evaluated and the purpose of the evaluation – for example peer review approaches are not likely to be used for assessment of the direct funding of industrial R&D. Second, when the data is split into country-level categories, the number of cases in each 'cell' becomes very low in many cases and offers too few cases on which a statistical analysis could be performed. Thus, the only countries with above eight responses are: Czech Republic (8), Germany (13), France (24), Italy (9), Poland (26).

Table 11 presents data on the collection methods employed for these countries, while Table 12 presents data on the data analysis methods used for the same set of countries.

Table 11: Use of data collection methods… by country (Survey Q13)

	CZ	DE	FR	IT	PL
Existing monitoring data	75%	85%	83%	100%	92%
Existing surveys or databases	75%	77%	54%	56%	73%
Document and literature searches	88%	77%	67%	78%	89%
Participant interviews	100%	77%	71%	89%	92%
Non-participant interviews	38%	8%	33%	22%	58%
Participant surveys	38%	46%	46%	44%	92%
Non-participant surveys	25%	15%	13%	11%	46%
Focus groups, workshops, group meetings, etc.	50%	69%	38%	56%	88%
Peer reviews	38%	77%	25%	11%	39%
Bibliometric or patent database studies	0%	23%	4%	0%	8%
Other data collection methods	0%	0%	8%	0%	8%

Table 12: Use of data analysis methods… by country (Survey Q14)

	CZ	DE	FR	IT	PL
Descriptive statistics	100%	92%	79%	78%	96%
Input/output analysis	50%	46%	38%	56%	35%
Cost benefit approach	50%	38%	21%	22%	31%
Econometric analysis	25%	15%	17%	0%	46%
Counter-factual approaches	0%	23%	4%	56%	35%
Case studies	50%	100%	63%	56%	96%
Network analysis	25%	31%	33%	11%	15%
Other analytical methods	0%	0%	8%	0%	8%

The results in Table 11 and Table 12 show a number of variations between countries (for example, the high proportion of peer reviews reported in Germany). However, owing to the very low number of cases available for these analyses, the results should be treated with caution. For this reason, the analysis was repeated but at the level of the country aggregations described on page 6. The results of these analyses are shown in Table 13 and Table 14.

To recap, the groupings are:

- Large MS (France, Germany, UK)
- Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden)
- New MS-East (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic)
- New MS-Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania)
- Small and medium MS (Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria)
- Southern/Mediterranean MS (Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal).

Table 13: Use of data collection methods… by country groups (Survey Q13)

	Large MS	Nordic countries	New MS-East	New MS-Baltics	Small and medium MS	Southern/ Mediterranean MS	EU27
Existing monitoring data	85%	92%	87%	100%	86%	95%	89%
Existing surveys or databases	66%	83%	72%	80%	71%	74%	72%
Document and literature searches	73%	100%	89%	100%	86%	79%	85%
Participant interviews	76%	92%	89%	70%	76%	89%	83%
Non-participant interviews	24%	33%	45%	20%	14%	16%	29%
Participant surveys	51%	92%	72%	70%	52%	53%	63%
Non-participant surveys	12%	25%	36%	0%	5%	11%	19%
Focus groups, workshops, group meetings, etc.	46%	92%	74%	70%	57%	47%	62%
Peer reviews	39%	33%	32%	20%	19%	11%	29%
Bibliometric or patent database studies	10%	0%	6%	10%	0%	0%	5%
Other data collection methods	5%	17%	4%	10%	0%	5%	5%

Table 14: Use of data analysis methods… by country groups (Survey Q14)

	Large MS	Nordic countries	New MS-East	New MS-Baltics	Small and medium MS	Southern/ Mediterranean MS	EU27
Descriptive statistics	85%	100%	96%	100%	95%	84%	92%
Input/output analysis	43%	75%	38%	40%	62%	53%	48%
Cost benefit approach	25%	25%	28%	30%	38%	32%	29%
Econometric analysis	18%	8%	38%	10%	14%	11%	21%
Counter-factual approaches	13%	0%	28%	20%	10%	32%	19%
Case studies	75%	92%	77%	60%	52%	63%	71%
Network analysis	30%	75%	15%	30%	19%	26%	27%
Other analytical methods	7%	17%	4%	0%	0%	5%	5%

Overall, no major patterns in the use of data collection methods (Table 13) could be discerned although some variation was detectable. For example, document and literature searches had a high level of use in the Nordic and Baltic countries; the new Eastern Member States tended to employ non-participant interviews and surveys more than other countries, particularly the small and medium and Southern Member States; the Nordic countries favoured the use of participant surveys and also focus group approaches and some variation was evident in the use of peer reviews, with smaller and Southern Member States making less use of this approach than larger countries. Indeed, there was a possible correlation between its use and the size of

country, which might indicate that the availability of sufficient experts for peer panels is more limited in smaller countries.

In terms of data analysis methods (Table 14), all countries used descriptive statistics to a large extent; the use of input/output analysis was favoured by the Nordic countries; the new Eastern Member States tended to use econometric methods to a greater extent than other country groups; the Southern countries seemed to show a greater preference for the use of counter-factual approaches; smaller Member States seemed to show a lower tendency to use case studies; the Nordic countries showed a distinct preference for network analysis – far above other country groupings and also for alternative analytical approaches.

Issues faced by commissioning authorities

Table 15 shows the reported difficulties that respondents can face when commissioning or managing evaluations of programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities. Based on the proportion of respondents providing a 'very relevant' response, it appears that the most relevant ones concern limitations in available budgets or personnel resources, and a lack of in-house knowledge on methods for such evaluations. The least relevant issues faced include a lack of need to perform such evaluations, an absence of innovation support in the region, and evaluation activities do not form part of the policy implementation process.

Table 15: Difficulties faced when commissioning or managing evaluations of programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities (Survey Q15)

	Very relevant		Sometimes relevant		Rarely relevant		Not relevant	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Available budgets or personnel resources are too limited to support such evaluations	31	21%	47	32%	38	21%	37	26%
Lack of in-house knowledge on methods for such evaluations	27	19%	57	39%	30	21%	31	21%
Higher policy levels and other stakeholders have no demand for such evaluation activities	16	11%	52	36%	38	26%	39	27%
Do not wish to place additional burdens on client/target group by performing such evaluations	13	9%	34	23%	41	28%	57	39%
Lack of expertise amongst potential consultants to perform such evaluations	13	9%	47	32%	50	34%	35	24%
Innovation support is not provided in region	8	6%	21	14%	27	19%	89	61%
Evaluation activities do not form part of the policy implementation process	7	5%	31	21%	32	22%	75	52%
Existing evaluation methods/approaches are inappropriate for specific context of regional innovation support	6	4%	39	27%	53	37%	47	32%
No strong reason to undertake such evaluations	2	1%	22	15%	28	19%	93	64%
Other potential difficulties	10	7%	11	8%	12	8%	112	77%

An alternative method of interpreting this data is given in

Table 16 which presents a weighted score for each of the specified issues. This was calculated by attaching a score of '1' to the category 'very relevant', '2' to 'sometimes relevant' etc and then calculating the average across each issue. This presentation confirms the perceived importance of a lack of in-house knowledge for evaluation and limitations in available budgets or personnel resources for the conduct of evaluations. A lack of experienced consultants to perform such evaluations is also accorded a relatively high degree of relevance.

Table 16: Difficulties faced when commissioning or managing evaluations of programmes or other schemes to support innovation activities: weighted scores

	weighted score (low = greater relevance)
There is a lack of in-house knowledge on methods for such evaluations	2.5
Available budgets or personnel resources are too limited to support such evaluations	2.5
Higher policy levels and other stakeholders have no demand for such evaluation activities	2.6
There is a lack of expertise amongst potential consultants to perform such evaluations	2.7
We do not wish to place additional burdens on our client/target group by performing such evaluations	3.0
Existing evaluation methods/approaches are inappropriate for our specific context of regional innovation support	3.0
Evaluation activities do not form part of the policy implementation process	3.2
Innovation support is not provided in your region	3.4
We see no strong reason to undertake such evaluations	3.5
Other potential difficulties	3.6

Supplementary analyses were performed regarding the responses concerning resource limitations to perform evaluations and the lack of expertise amongst potential consultants to perform evaluations. These sought to identify any specific differences between countries in the relative importance accorded to these factors.

Table 17 presents the results for these analyses, which lists those countries where the weighted importance was 2.0 or less (i.e. sometimes to very relevant). Note that for some countries the number of responses was very low: the number of responses is indicated in parentheses.

There is a tendency for small countries to be more likely to report the two factors as barriers or difficulties towards the performance of evaluations, although the position of the Netherlands and Austria towards the top of the first list (concerning limited resources) is slightly surprising, given the track record for evaluation in both countries. However, the survey responses reflect the regional situation, which would be expected to differ, sometimes markedly, from that pertaining to the national level – thus the regional level situation would logically be expected to be similar to that found in the smaller Member States.

This rationale does not hold for the lack of expertise amongst potential consultants as regional authorities would have access to the national 'pool' of such consultants. In this case, the results tend to indicate that small/new Member States tend to face this type of barrier to a greater extent than the older/larger Member States.

Table 17: Major barriers faced by MAs in evaluating ERDF and similar schemes

Available budgets or personnel resources too limited		Lack of expertise amongst potential consultants	
Country	**weighted score (low = greater relevance)**	**Country**	**weighted score (low = greater relevance)**
Luxembourg (2)	1.0	Lithuania (1)	1.0
Malta (1)	1.0	Malta (1)	1.0
Estonia (5)	1.4	Portugal (2)	1.5
Netherlands (5)	1.8	Estonia (5)	1.6
Austria (6)	1.8	Romania (4)	1.8
Belgium (2)	2.0	Latvia (1)	2.0
Denmark (2)	2.0	Luxembourg (2)	2.0
Ireland (5)	2.0	Slovenia (2)	2.0
Greece (2)	2.0		
Spain (4)	2.0		
Latvia (1)	2.0		
Lithuania (1)	2.0		
Portugal (2)	2.0		
Finland (3)	2.0		

Again, however, for both sets of results, the numbers of cases are very limited and any conclusions must be very cautious. Therefore, as in Section 4.2.6, the analysis was repeated using the country aggregations described on page 6[3]. This analysis is presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Major barriers faced by MAs in evaluating ERDF and similar schemes

Available budgets or personnel resources too limited		Lack of expertise amongst potential consultants	
Country grouping	**weighted score (low = greater relevance)**	**Country grouping**	**weighted score (low = greater relevance)**
New MS-Baltics	1.6	New MS-Baltics	1.6
Small and medium MS	1.8	New MS-East	2.5
Southern/Medit. MS	2.2	Southern/Medit. MS	2.6
Large MS	2.7	Nordic countries	3.0
New MS-East	2.8	Small and medium MS	3.1
Nordic countries	3.0	Large MS	3.1
All countries	**2.5**		**2.8**

The results confirm those presented above in that the availability of budgets and personnel resources is a greater concern for smaller Member States, although the comparatively low level of relevance for the new Eastern European Member States is slightly surprising. Again, in

[3] Large MS (France, Germany, UK); Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden); New MS-East (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic); New MS-Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania); Small and medium MS (Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria); Southern/Mediterranean MS (Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal).

interpreting these results, it is necessary to recall that the responses relate to the regional rather than national level.

With regard to the second barrier, i.e. a lack of expertise amongst potential consultants, the results seem to suggest that this is a particular problem amongst the new Member States and those from Southern Europe/Mediterranean countries, possibly reflecting the relative absence of a developed evaluation consultancy community in those countries.

4.2.7 Distribution of evaluations and interesting examples

Table 19 shows the distribution by country of the example evaluations provided by the respondents in response to survey Q9[4]. It follows a similar trend to the country distribution of the respondents themselves as France, Poland and Germany tend to form the dominant countries.

Returning to the broader aggregations of EU Member States described in Section 4.2.2, the evaluations are distributed as follows:

- Large MS (France, Germany, UK) – 90
- Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) – 50
- New MS-East (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic) – 159
- New MS-Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) – 13
- Small and medium MS (Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria) – 65
- Southern/Mediterranean MS (Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal) – 61

From of the 442 evaluations suggested as examples, approximately half (219) were further considered as useful/important or interesting for gaining policy insights or which might be considered as examples of good practice (in response to survey Q10) – see Table 20.

[4] Q9: Please indicate the title(s) of the relevant evaluation(s), the year in which it was undertaken, the name of the organisation or expert which undertook it, the url where a copy can be downloaded (if available).

Table 19: Country Distribution of Evaluations (Survey Q9)

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Missing – not specified	4	0.9	0.9	0.9
AT: ÖSTERREICH	22	5.0	5.0	5.9
BE: BELGIQUE-BELGIË	9	2.0	2.0	7.9
BG: BULGARIA	1	0.2	0.2	8.1
CY: CYPRUS/ KIBRIS	1	0.2	0.2	8.4
CZ: CESKÁ REPUBLIKA	22	5.0	5.0	13.3
DE: DEUTSCHLAND	33	7.5	7.5	20.8
DK: DANMARK	9	2.0	2.0	22.9
EE: EESTI	8	1.8	1.8	24.7
ES: ESPAÑA	11	2.5	2.5	27.1
FI: SUOMI / FINLAND	11	2.5	2.5	29.6
FR: FRANCE	48	10.9	10.9	40.5
GR: GREECE / ELLADA	6	1.4	1.4	41.9
HU: MAGYARORSZÁG	10	2.3	2.3	44.1
IE: IRELAND	15	3.4	3.4	47.5
IT: ITALIA	29	6.6	6.6	54.1
LT: LIETUVA	4	0.9	0.9	55.0
LU: LUXEMBOURG (GRAND-DUCHÉ)	2	0.5	0.5	55.4
LV: LATVIJA	1	0.2	0.2	55.7
MT: MALTA	3	0.7	0.7	56.3
NL: NEDERLAND	17	3.8	3.8	60.2
PL: POLSKA	109	24.7	24.7	84.8
PT: PORTUGAL	11	2.5	2.5	87.3
RO: ROMÂNIA	9	2.0	2.0	89.4
SE: SVERIGE	30	6.8	6.8	96.2
SI: SLOVENIJA	3	0.7	0.7	96.8
SK: SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA	5	1.1	1.1	98.0
UK: UNITED KINGDOM	9	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	442	100.0	100.0	

Table 20: The most useful/important or interesting evaluations for gaining policy insights or which might be considered as examples of good practice (Survey Q10)

	Frequency	Percent
No	223	50.5
Yes	219	49.5
Total	442	100.0

5 Conclusions

A number of broad conclusions may be drawn:

1. In retrospect, it would have been desirable to have had a more equitable distribution of the initial panel members with less bias towards a limited number of countries. However, there were apparently significant difficulties in generating contact names from some countries.

2. The use of non-English language surveys was found to be effective in boosting the response rate for certain countries (France, Poland, Italy, Germany and Austria) but less effective for Spain, where the response rate was low independent of the language used. However, the use of translated questionnaires and accompanying emails was resource intensive, as was the accompanying handling and analysis of responses. Moreover, it was only cost-effective in the case of countries which had reasonably large panel sizes.

3. There was a very large variation in response rates. For instance, countries with a good level of response included: Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Romania, Spain and Sweden. Relatively poor response rates were provided by Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. Given the latter's reputation for having a well developed culture of evaluation, this is somewhat surprising but may be partially explained by the recent closure of the English Regional Development Agencies. Overall, however, the response rate for a cold-approach survey was very good.

4. Amongst the respondents, the level of familiarity with the implementation and management of innovation support measures was high (74%). While this may have been a consequence of the non-response of contacts who were not able to answer the questions posed by the survey, it provides a set of respondents able to provide a knowledgeable set of answers to the questions posed.

5. Similarly, a high proportion of the respondents also reported familiarity with the evaluation of ERDF co-funded innovation support measures and similar schemes. Again, this should act to ensure the relevance of the response set.

6. A very broad sample of example evaluation reports was provided which were used as a valuable input to the literature review. Many of these had associated urls which enabled them to be located and downloaded.

7. The distribution of the example evaluation reports, although somewhat biased towards the countries which accounted for the larger shares of the respondents, was nevertheless reasonably well-distributed across the major country groups.

8. While the distribution of the types of measures associated with the evaluation reports tended to follow that which might have been anticipated (with a large proportion of direct funding type measures), there was a relatively equitable spread across all the measure types, with a very small residual group of un-categorised measures.

9. Generally, the data collection methodologies typically employed in the evaluation of the measures tended to follow that anticipated (i.e. the use of monitoring data and document searches, followed by interviews). As the use of monitoring data (i.e. data collected through the course of the measure) is a cost effective approach, as opposed to the collection of data *ab initio* during the evaluation process itself, this seems to suggest that the use of this appropriate methodology is widely adopted. Some interesting variations were noted in the comparative degree of usage of data collection methodologies, which might reflect national contexts and the type of innovation support measures being employed and hence evaluated.

10. Similarly, the use of data analysis approaches also follows an anticipated pattern, with descriptive statistics and case studies being used most frequently. However, the relatively frequent use of more sophisticated approaches such as cost-benefit, econometric and network analysis was quite surprising. Again, there were some variations in the degree of analytical approaches across the broad country groupings, presumably for the same reasons given above.

11. The types of barriers and issues associated with the application of evaluations to innovation support measures at the regional level were also along the anticipated lines, being mainly related to resources and capabilities/skills constraints (the latter both in-house and, to a lesser degree, in the available community of consultants). However, the reported high relevance of a lack of higher level demand for evaluation is somewhat concerning. These two major barriers appeared to affect the smaller and newer Member States to a greater extent than other groups of countries, although the Southern/Mediterranean countries also expressed concerns over the availability of evaluation expertise.

12. Overall, the survey can be considered to have met its broad aims in that it:
    a. Identified a large sample of evaluation reports, of which around half were considered to be of interest as potential examples of good practice and therefore potential candidates for the basis of case studies.
    b. Identified a reasonable set of targets for the telephone survey.
    c. Provided a snapshot of the types of measures that are evaluated at regional level across the MS.
    d. Identified the typical evaluation methodologies and approaches used in these evaluations, and
    e. Identified the major factors acting as possible barriers to evaluation practice at the regional level across the MS.