

th CONFERENCE on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

16-17 September 2021 Porto, Portugal

Shaping Transitions with Evidence



Putting Evaluations at Work: Italy's LABs - Workshops for Evaluation Utilization



Italy's National Evaluation System

FUNDS COVERED

- ▶ ERDF, ESF, EARDF, National Resources

PROGRAMMING PERIODS

- ▶ 2007-2013; 2014-2020

PROGRAMME COVERED

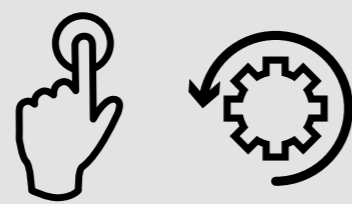
- ▶ National and Regional Operational Programmes

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES

- ▶ T05, T03, T09

TYPE OF EVALUATION

- ▶ impact and process



YEAR OF COMPLETION

- ▶ 2021

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Support Regional authorities in substantiating Operational Programmes 21-27 with knowledge from evaluations and other sources
- ▶ Help evaluations of Cohesion Policy find their way into programming, implementation, and find their way into public discourse, programming etc...

METHODOLOGY USED

- ▶ Participatory techniques to facilitate both the national work group (NUVAP, other National Research Centres, Regional Authorities and Evaluation Units) and work groups within each participating Region
- ▶ Ad-hoc method based on evaluation questions from the OP template

DATA SOURCES

- ▶ Data from administrative (e.g. OpenCoesione) and statistical sources
- ▶ Evaluations and Evaluation Reviews
- ▶ Studies
- ▶ Evaluative reasoning and public servants' implicit knowledge
- ▶ Interviews with key informants at local level

MAIN FINDINGS

▶ LAB1: Hydrogeological instability.

Hydrogeological instability affects much of Italy's population and land. Policy has focused on emergencies rather than on prevention or event tracking. A fragmented governance has weakened the policy and produced only partial and heterogeneous data.

In 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, Cohesion policy has financed 7,250 projects (7.8bln Euro, payments of 3.5 bln in June 2020).

Regional authorities of Calabria, Liguria, Sicilia, Veneto, Umbria produced evidence that:

- investments only partially matched needs
- coordination in governance determined effectiveness
- local communities and agricultural firms played a key role in land management and maintenance
- interoperability in physical and financial planning and monitoring is needed.

▶ LAB2: Competitiveness of firms and local systems. National and regional policy tools (e.g., infrastructure, logistics, credit, guarantees, state aid, business services, training, education) often fail both to cater to the needs of local productive systems and to interact with and support place-based policy tools.

Regional authorities of Calabria, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Piedmont, Sicily, and Sardinia.

- assessed the needs of their productive sectors and the impact of COVID-induced crisis
- drew lessons from local experiences.

▶ LAB3: Active Inclusion and full access to quality services for all. Multi-dimension social interventions for extremely vulnerable groups are key for social cohesion. Even good project design is nothing without careful implementation.

Participating Regions (Abruzzo, Basilicata, Bolzano, Lazio, Liguria, Marche, Molise, Piemonte, Umbria, Veneto) analysed how ESF interventions interacted with national policies and analysed the consequences of different ways to select service providers.

Intra-agency cooperation and joint design between regional authorities and private and third sector actors yield promising outcomes, yet encounter administrative barriers.

CONCLUSIONS

The three LABs activated collective evaluative thinking towards drafting 21-27 Programmes

- LABs contributed to change in administrative practices through on-the-job collective learning
- Inter-institutional groups ensured knowledge exchange among Regional authorities and with local actors
- Evaluation Units effectively dealt evaluation results and other knowledge within their Regional organisation
- Regions' Managing Authorities that typically have little time to reflect successfully systematized patchy knowledge from various sources



AUTHOR(S) OF THE EVALUATION

Collective endeavour by Regions' Evaluation Units and Regional Authorities
 Coordinators: Evaluation Unit of the Department for Cohesion Policies (NUVAP), ANPAL, CREA, ISPRA, and Tecnostruttura