

# th CONFERENCE on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

16-17 September 2021 Porto, Portugal

## Shaping Transitions with Evidence



### Evaluation of the mechanisms and capacity to implement ESI Funds

Ministry of European Investment and Projects



#### FUNDS COVERED

- ▶ ESI (ERDF, ESF/YEI, CF, EAFRD, EMFF)

#### PROGRAMMING PERIOD

- ▶ 2014-2020

#### PROGRAMME COVERED

- ▶ Partnership Agreement with Romania

#### THEMATIC OBJECTIVE

- ▶ TO11; Efficient public administration

#### TYPE OF EVALUATION

- ▶ Process



#### YEAR OF COMPLETION

- ▶ 2020

#### MAIN OBJECTIVES

The evaluation assesses the complementarity and coordination mechanisms, the partnership, the administrative capacity and the administrative burden at the level of the Partnership Agreement. It has been conducted in order to facilitate evidence-based decisions.

#### METHODOLOGY USED

theory-based, administrative capacity index, standard cost method, SWOT, benchmarking, content analysis.

#### DATA SOURCES

- ▶ Reports, minutes of the Monitoring Committee meetings, over 100 interviews, four surveys.

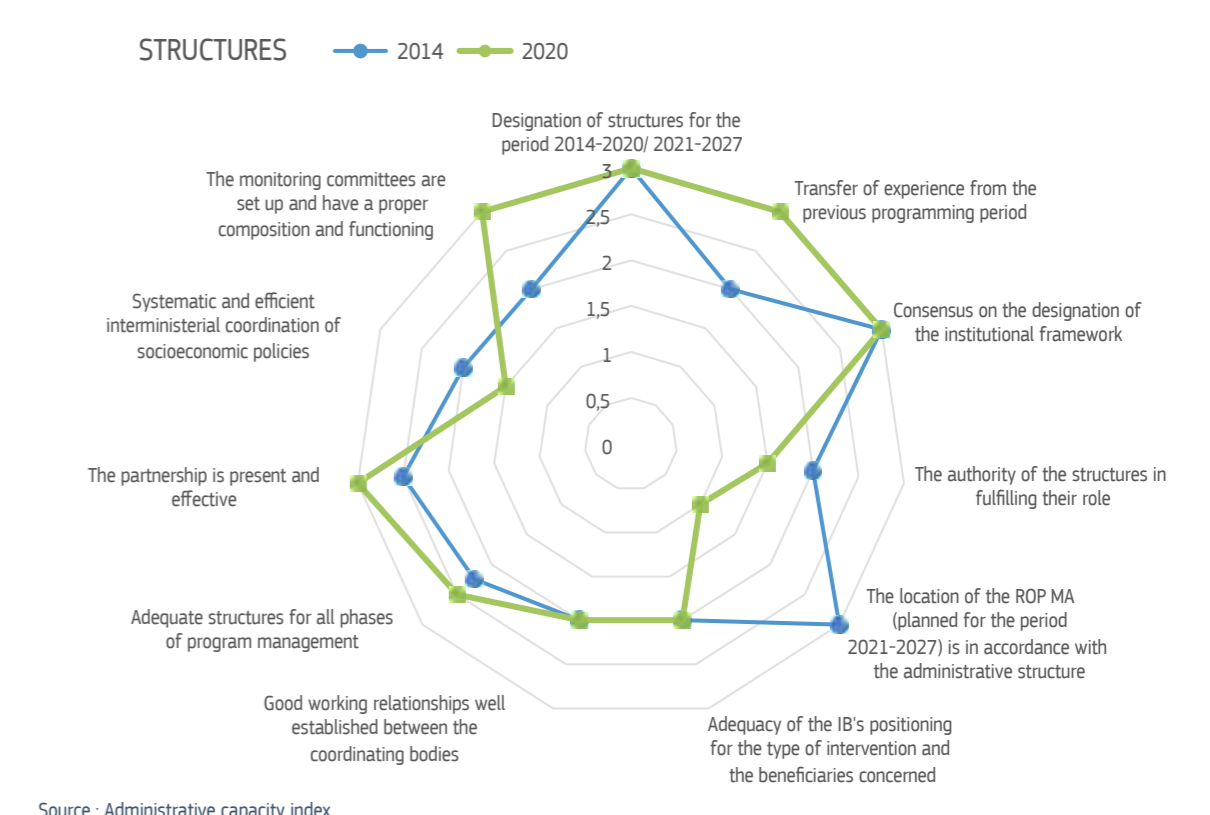
#### MAIN FINDINGS

- ▶ The coordination mechanism is partially operational and effective. Often a preference was given to the classic inter-institutional cooperation instead of what was initially established
- ▶ Partnership involves 70% representatives of civil society. They are selected by an open process, but their involvement is rather reactive, due to the limited working capacity of some partners
- ▶ Progress has been made in development of the administrative capacity of authorities and beneficiaries. Improvements are needed for inter-ministerial coordination, human resources policies and performance management. The beneficiaries need experienced project managers, capacity to produce project portfolios, sufficient human resources, quality of consultancy services etc
- ▶ The administrative burden is perceived as high. Needs for simplification vary by type of programme (infrastructure vs soft). Administrative costs incurred by infrastructure projects are covered by project eligible budget to a smaller extent. Three thirds of administrative costs are triggered by implementation, while two thirds of them are borne by the public sector. Inter-institutional correlation of databases is weak.

#### CONCLUSIONS

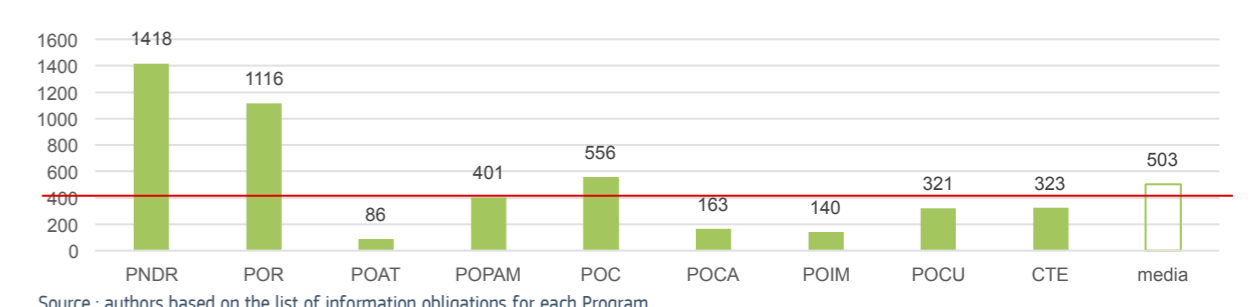
- ▶ A more dynamic coordination mechanism
- ▶ More time for discussions in partnerships
- ▶ Remove redundancies
- ▶ HR policies framed based on programme cycle management and job needed competencies
- ▶ Consultancy networks
- ▶ Facile application of pre-financing, payment and reimbursement mechanisms
- ▶ Different simplification approach by type of programmes
- ▶ Identify efficiency thresholds and acceptable administrative costs for diverse categories of beneficiaries.

Evolution of the administrative capacity of the authorities – Structures (marks from 0 to 3 according to the administrative capacity index)



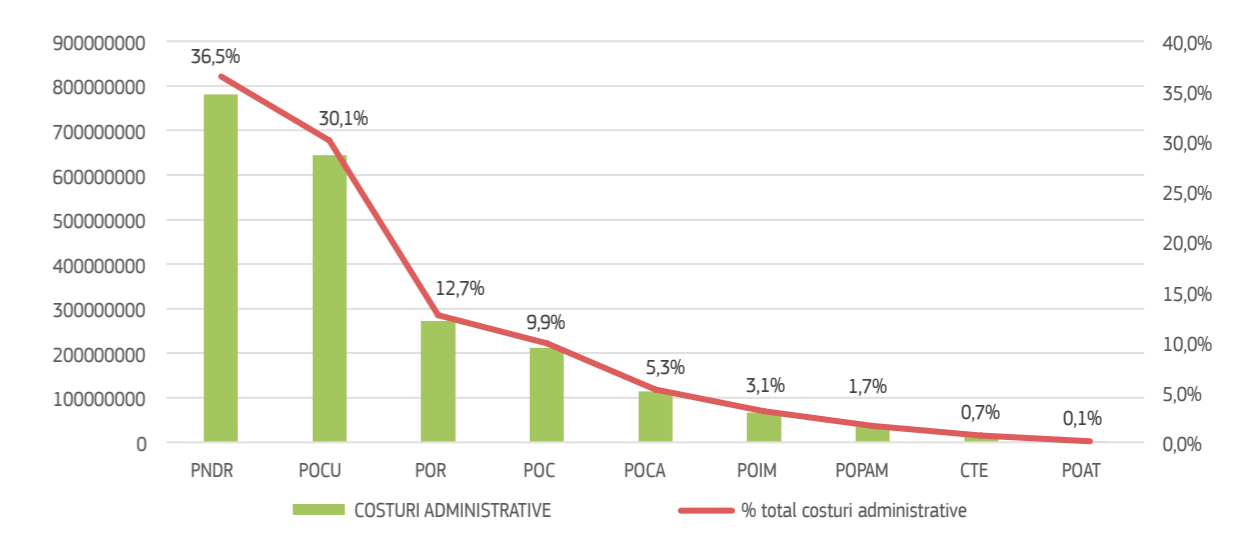
Source: Administrative capacity index

Cumulative number of information obligations required at the level of the Operational Program



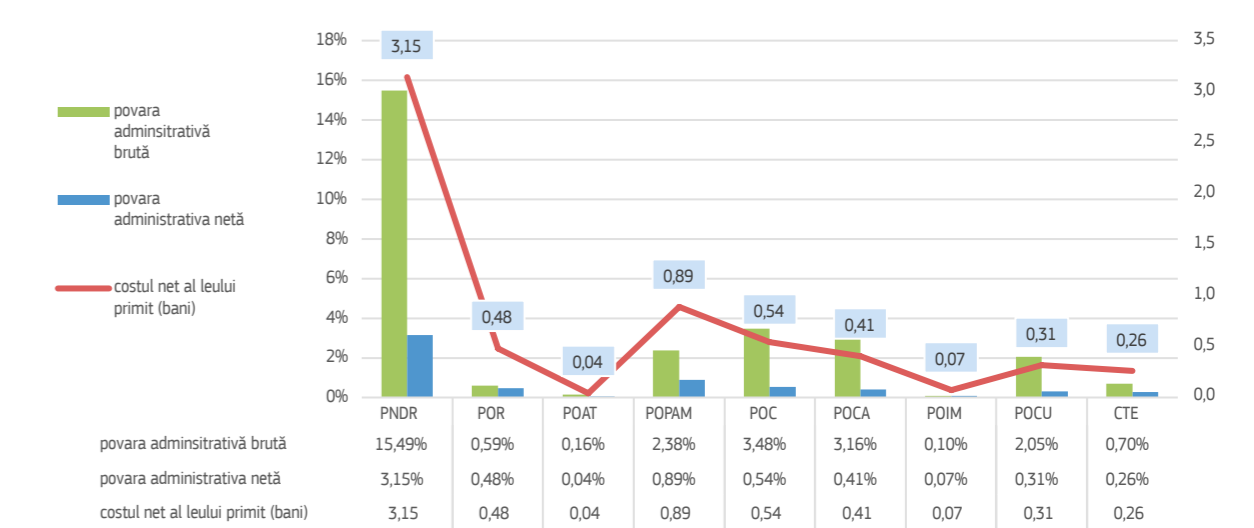
Source: authors based on the list of information obligations for each Program

The difficulty of the activities necessary to fulfill the information obligations, as perceived by the beneficiaries



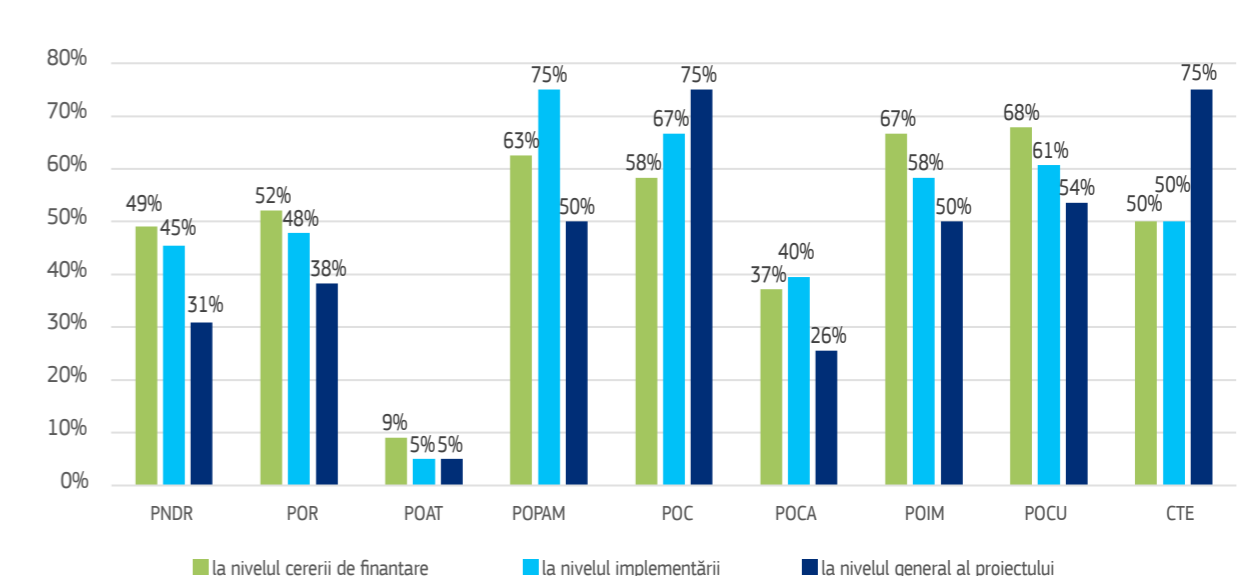
Source: authors based on the survey with beneficiaries

Ratio between gross administrative burden, net administrative burden and cost of a leu (RON) received (money)



Source: authors based on the survey with beneficiaries

High or very high perception of administrative burden among beneficiaries / OP



Source: authors based on the survey with beneficiaries